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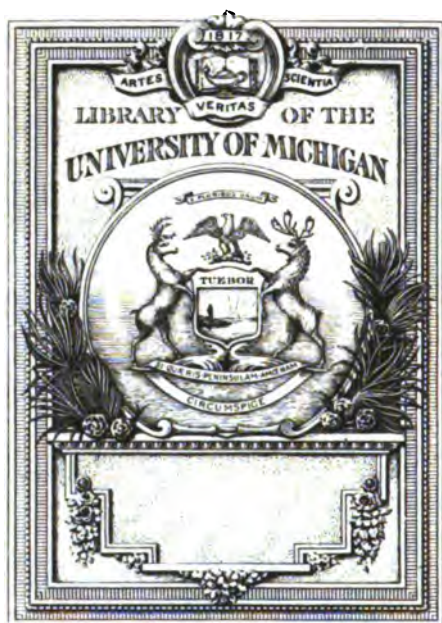
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**BELGRADE**  
**THE WHITE CITY OF DEATH**





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W 40 U



*The late King Alexander of Serbia.*

**BELGRADE THE  
WHITE CITY OF  
DEATH. BEING THE  
HISTORY OF KING  
ALEXANDER AND OF  
QUEEN DRAGA . . .**

**Mrs. NORTHINGTON**  
ILLUSTRATED BY NUMEROUS  
ARTISTS KINDLY LENT BY THE  
LIBRARY

**EDMUND M. M. M. M.**  
SERBIAN MINISTER AT THE COURT OF LONDON



**W. K. F. P. P. P. P. P.**  
111 STREET STRAND, W.C. 1903

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our Alexander of Greece

# BELGRADE THE WHITE CITY OF DEATH. BEING THE HISTORY OF KING ALEXANDER AND OF QUEEN DRAGA . . .

By MRS. <sup>†</sup>NORTHESK WILSON

ILLUSTRATED BY NUMEROUS POR-  
TRAITS KINDLY LENT BY HIS EX-  
CELLENCY

M. CHEDOMILLE MIJATOVICH

SERVIAN MINISTER AT THE COURT OF ST. JAMES



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Court of St. James, also to MADAME  
ELODIE MIJATOVICH, for their kind help  
to her in the compilation of this volume.*





## P R E F A C E

*IT is likely to be some time before Europe will have recovered from the shock it received at the assassination of the late King and Queen of Servia. In England particularly we have come to think of civilization as something essentially bound up with limited monarchy, parliamentary government, and the complete supremacy of the Civil power. When we are suddenly confronted with the self-assertion of the military element in a European State, with a revolution accomplished by physical violence and bloodshed, and the triumph of the murderers, we are apt to think that the Powers are nursing in their midst a relic from the age of barbarism. We forget that Servia is a comparatively new State. The domestic life of its people is far more "modern" and "civilized" than its political life. The latter in its origin was necessarily steeped in war and bloodshed, and its political traditions have not yet been completely purged by the spirit of order which has been gradually moulding the habits of the people. Moreover, a long-standing vendetta between the rival houses has for the best part of a century made the throne an object of*

*dispute. It is not very long since we have seen in France, in Spain, and in Italy violence, or threats of violence, due to rival claimants to the throne, or rival forms of government. But in Servia this rivalry has long been an inheritance. The situation has been aggravated by the fact that Servia is one of the small States of the Balkan Peninsula jealously watched by three rivals for supremacy—Russia, Austria, and Turkey. I shall have to show in this little book how insidious, how treacherous, and how shameless a part was played by Russian diplomacy in the events immediately leading up to the assassination of Alexander and Draga.*

*I have been particularly fortunate in the help I have received in securing definite and authentic information, both about the murder, the events preceding it, and the persons who participated in it. First of all I must acknowledge a debt of gratitude to His Excellency, M. Chedomille Mijatovich, the Servian Minister at the Court of St. James, without whose assistance this book could never have been put together. I have to thank him for giving me free access to an important paper he had in his possession ; for lending me many of the interesting photographs which are reproduced in this volume ; and for supplying me by word of mouth with a host of information which I could not have secured from any other source. Moreover, he has kindly read over the proof-sheets, and corrected the errors he has*

*noticed. His Excellency, on receiving the official despatch of the tragedy, at once tendered his resignation; up to the time of going to press, however, this had not been accepted.*

*I have thought that the best way of presenting the truth about the recent tragedy was to write in outline a history of the royal families of Servia. At best I have only been able to give a brief sketch, suggesting the different influences which have been brought to bear both from within the State and from without. Circumstances have compelled me to write the book at high pressure, and the style at any rate has suffered in consequence. The last chapter had to be written when I was laid up by illness. But I say this, not with a view to forestall criticism, but to draw attention to the matter rather than to the form. I have hopes that the truth of my narrative, of which I can speak with certainty, may atone for defects in the style.*

*F. NORTHESK WILSON.*



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## **FOREWORD**



## FOREWORD.

### THE EVE OF THE TRAGEDY.

ON the hot, sultry evening of Thursday, June 11th, sentries were pacing to and fro before the Palace, or Konak, in Belgrade. All the fever of murmuring rebellion was forgotten in the quiet of the Palace walls. Again Queen Draga had triumphed. But this time her victory over the Constitution and the officers of the Army was complete ; King Alexander had consented to abolish the Constitution and nominate Nicodim, brother of Queen Draga, his successor to the throne.

But whilst the Queen sat in the Palace, clad in beautiful garments, and contentedly plying her needle, not far off a band of conspirators had come together.

"*To-night*," said M. Velkovitch, as he shook a paper in the faces of the men, who, stern-faced and grim, wore the appearance of judges rather than desperate men intent on a desperate deed.

"To-night," repeated Velkovitch. "It is our heads or theirs. We are all proscribed. Here we have it in the King's own writing—more than a hundred of us marked out as traitors awaiting execution."

Colonel Maschine nodded approval. He was brother-in-law of the Queen, and felt for her a personal hatred which inflamed his political opinions.

"This paper," he said slowly, with the wolfish smile that changed his whole countenance—"this paper has been stolen from the King's desk. He does not know we are informed of his plans. But we owe it to our country to execute the woman Draga, who has dragged down the King to be the tool of her purpose."

"Ay! to kill the woman Draga."

"But the King?—we would spare the King."

The conspirators drew closer together, and amid their hoarse whispers were matured the plans which afterwards achieved success in a carnival of blood. But all agreed that the King should have his chance of life.

On that last night of peace and quiet it is known that the King revelled in the triumph he

thought he had finally won over his turbulent soldier subjects. Nothing could seemingly have been more harmonious than the attitude of the Queen, a beautiful, bewitching woman, whose splendid dark eyes could express all the fervour of her varied emotions. As she sat there, laughing and talking with the young King, whose adoration had never waned, she looked forward to many things; the danger of her position seemed but to have stimulated in her the joy of living. Her power and the knowledge that the murmurers were silenced gave her no presentiment that it was a game of life and death for the King and for her.

There came a knock at the door; one of the traitors was demanding audience. At a sign the Queen entered an adjoining room. It was a strange and dreadful moment when the King saw the imperious Colonel Naoumovitch before him.

"Sire, again in your own interests, we demand of you, do you abolish the Constitution and put together a packed assembly to proclaim Nicodim heir to the Servian Throne?"

"I do absolutely," came a soft voice from the inner room.

"I do absolutely," repeated the King. "This

is an unwarrantable, insufferable intrusion," he added.

"Pardon, Sire," said the officer with emotion; "up to now we are sworn in allegiance to your Majesty, but to the woman Draga——"

"Silence!" thundered the King. "I am ruler of Servia, and the Army obeys me."

"Sire," cried out the officer, "I would warn your Majesty—the consequences of your act will be terrible."

The young King laughed and repeated the sentence which has since become famous: "*Do what you will! you will not dare touch me. You are my officers, my soldiers, sworn to me.*"

The Queen in her magnificent morning gown (she always loved to appear exquisitely clothed) suddenly entered. Her eyes were no longer tender or alluring, they were no longer the eyes of Draga Maschine the adventuress.

"I am Queen. We have no heir—my brother succeeds to Servia." With those words she pronounced her own doom.

\* \* \* \* \*

The last interview on that memorable night must have shaken all peace from the Queen's heart, for

neither she nor the King had retired at their accustomed hour. Already the Palace was in darkness, the electric light turned off at the main, when the first noise of tumult reached their ears, the first shot rang through the Palace. Some said that in the confusion the faithful aide-de-camp had fired in the King's defence. Inflamed with the first success of murder, the conspirators rushed from room to room. Murder and worse than murder was in the echo of the bursting doors and the rushing of feet, sabres plunged into the beds, and sounds of groans and torture. But there was a hush before the inner door was burst open. Within, clinging together, Draga and Alexander whispered their last words. Each knew that life depended on their separation, and life was sweet.

But as the murderers, bursting open the door, cried in self-exoneration, "Give up the woman Draga," the King, for all his desperate plight, cried back :

"Never! never! we love one another."

Thus one likes to think of him, shielding with his body the woman he loved, with nothing abject about him in those last moments. He faced the howling of his enemies and the swords still dripping with the

blood of his defenders. Never again could Belgrade be called the White City. It was the City of Death, its wonderful history palpitating with the quick pulse of memory. The throne which a new King ascends is still slippery with blood.



# BELGRADE

## THE WHITE CITY OF DEATH

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE KINGDOM OF SERVIA—ITS STATISTICAL AND COMMERCIAL POSITION.

THE Servians ("Serbi," as they call themselves) are a distinct national individuality within the family of Slavonic nations. Together with the Croats, Czechs (or Bohemians), Slovaks, Poles, Bulgarians, and Russians, they form the Slavonic national family. They consider all these other nations as their cousins, but are strongly imbued with the consciousness that they are a distinct nationality, which has played an important part in the history of Europe during the middle ages, and which ought to keep its distinct and independent position also in the future. They are much attached to their national

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language, which is recognised as the richest and most musical among all the Slavonic languages.

The Servians inhabit, besides the proper kingdom of Servia, Southern Hungary, Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, Hertzegovina, Montenegro, Old Servia ("Kossovo Vilayet"), the North and North-Western part of Macedonia. They are believed to number altogether between eight and nine millions.

But we are here concerned more particularly with the kingdom of Servia, in the capital of which the terrible tragedy of June 11th took place.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, just before the first rising of the Servians under Kara George in 1804, Servia was a miserable Turkish province, a "pashalic," governed only nominally by a "Vlzer" sent from Constantinople, but practically exploited as a private estate by a company of Turkish rebels against the Sultan and freebooters, called "Dahees." Except the old Roman road leading from Nish (Naissus) to Belgrade (Singidunum), there was no other road in the country. There were only "paths" for oxen and horses and pedestrians, leading from different villages to Belgrade and the small towns on the Nish-Belgrade road. The villages themselves were hidden deep in the woods

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KING ALEXANDER OF SERBIA AT THE AGE OF SIX.

Mr. J. W. H. H. H.

and forests, to be in that way more secure against the lawless attacks of the freebooting Turks, and consisted of most miserable huts, not much better than those of Central Africa. There was not a single public school in the country. In a few old monasteries young men, who aspired to be ordained priests one day, were taught by old monks to read and write in old Slavonic fashion. Most churches were half ruins, as the Turks would allow neither the building of new ones nor repairing of old ones. There was no export trade at all. The population did not amount to more than 300,000 inhabitants.

What a contrast to that picture presents the Servia of to-day !

The superficial area of Servia is something above 19,000 square miles (48,303 kilom-carrés). Its population, according to the last census (1900), was 2,500,000. Its natural growth is so constant and rapid that it is computed it will reach nearly three millions before 1910.

The population is almost homogeneous, inasmuch as with the exception of 160,000 Roumanians (Vallachs), 46,000 gypsies, about 7,000 Germans, and 5,000 Jews, the whole remaining population consists of Servians.

Servia has now 1,278 well-regulated and well-to-do

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villages and thirty larger flourishing towns, of which Belgrade, the capital, has 70,000 inhabitants.

Public instruction is free and compulsory. There are now in Servia 860 normal or elementary schools for boys and 150 for girls. Besides these there are 14 middle schools with classical instruction, 12 middle schools without such instruction, 6 higher colleges for girls, 2 Polytechnical schools, 1 theological college, 2 schools for teachers, 1 college for higher commercial education, 1 school for agriculture, and a special school for vineyards. Besides that, there is a superior school for the education of military officers (military academy in Belgrade), and a small university (with three faculties) called "Velika shkola." In spite of all these efforts, on an average from a hundred Servians only about twenty can read and write. But enlightenment is progressing steadily.

Servia is practically an agricultural and cattle-rearing country. Out of every 1,000 inhabitants 835 are farmers and land labourers. Landed property is very much divided, and the country consists mainly of small freehold farms. Almost every villager has some land of his own. The small land proprietor is specially protected by law, inasmuch as a certain minimum of ground (five acres), one pair of oxen,

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KING ALEXANDER AS A BOY.

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and the plough and agricultural implements cannot be sold for debt. That law, and the generally fruitful land, brought about a state of things which has gained for Servia the appellation of *Poor Man's Paradise*. According to the last census, Servia had 170,000 horses, 915,700 oxen, 905,750 pigs, 3,097,000 sheep, and 525,990 goats.

The principal articles of Servian export are pigs, cattle, dried prunes, and cereals. The principal articles of import are cotton, linen, iron manufactures, salt, and mineral oil. The principal markets for Servian products are Austria and Germany; some prunes go as far as America. In the last two or three years successful attempts have been made to send to the London market fresh mutton and cured hams and bacon. The total value of the Servian exports amounted in the last year (1902) to about 70,000,000 francs (£2,800,000), while the total value of imports did not surpass 50,000,000 francs (£2,000,000).

Military service is compulsory. Every Servian is obliged to serve in the "Regular Army" for two years (nominally, but practically not more than one year) between his twentieth and thirtieth year; after that he is transferred to "the first call of the

National Army," to which he belongs between the thirtieth and fortieth year of his life ; and between his fortieth and fiftieth year he belongs to the second class of the National Army.

The Regular Army consists of five divisions of infantry, each one consisting of four regiments, each regiment of four battalions. In addition to these eighty battalions there are yet twenty battalions of complementary forces. Practically, Servia, in the case of war, can bring into the field some 80,000 trained soldiers of the Regular Army, 45 batteries of artillery, and five divisions of cavalry, altogether about 120,000 men. The first class of the National Army can give about 100,000 men ; whereas the second class has on its registers some 60,000. Servians like to boast that in case of need they could bring into the field 300,000 well-armed men.

The national revenue amounted in the last three years to about 70,000,000 francs, the direct taxation (land, personal tax, income tax) bringing in about 22,000,000, Custom Houses 12,000,000, and State monopolies (salt, tobacco, matches, etc.) nearly 30,000,000 of francs.

The national debt amounts to about 475,000,000 of francs. The principal bulk of the bonds bears



**ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL.**

(Who officiated at the marriage of King Milan and Queen Natalie in 1875, and who anointed King Alexander in 1889.)

87011

4 per cent. The annual charge on the Budget for the payment of coupons and amortisation of public debt amounts to 18,000,000 francs.

Servia is rich in all sorts of minerals : coal is abundant, also iron, copper, silver-bearing lead, and antimony. Of late very successful searching for gold has been made, and this year an Anglo-Servian Company for the exploitation of gold has been formed in London.

There are at present only 562 kilometres of railways in exploitation, but plans have been prepared for the construction of some 1,200 kilometres of branch railways.

## CHAPTER II.


### THE SERVIAN DYNASTY.

To read the past history of Servia is like listening to the thunder of the old prophets amid the majesty of constant destruction. Again might the tumult of that strenuous constant warfare sound the trumpet-call of attention to the White City which has been cast in the seething midst of an everlasting and ruinous conflict. And yet, behold! how fair a city, seen from the river! How imposing with its tall, white, slender minarets, its domed palaces, its gardens, and its cypresses! How gracefully it slopes down to the river on the tongue of land between the Save and the Danube! But the beauty which enchains the senses is the glitter of a whited sepulchre; for deep behind lies the festering sore of its Turkish quarter, inhabited only by Orientals. Unhappy city, having one Emperor as suzerain and another Emperor as protector!

It was in 1355 that the mighty Dushan of Servia

conquered Epirus, Thessaly, Bulgaria, and the greater part of Macedonia, and took upon himself the title of Emperor of the Greeks and Servians. He died suddenly on his march to Constantinople, and the great political system he had contemplated began to show symptoms of a quickly approaching decay.

The end of the year 1801 saw Servia a prey to systematised vandalism. It was a reign of unexampled tyranny and cruelty. The bloodthirstiness of the Sultan's janisaries increased like the strength of a torrent. The Dahis, in disobedience to the Sultan's firmans, commissioned murderers to proceed through Servia and kill all the mayors of towns and villages, chiefs of cantons, priests, and monks. A wave of terror swept over the land, spreading panic in every direction. Mothers hugged their children to their breasts, and men in hushed whispers spoke of self-destruction as a less miserable fate than falling into the hands of the Turks. Every male over seven years of age was to be destroyed. But something in the Servians which had hitherto lain dormant, a spirit of manhood which had not been manifested before, arose under the whip of this gigantic thralldom; seemingly the crushed and oppressed drew breath, the instinct of self-preservation kindled their



hearts, and the embers burst out into a new fire of patriotism.

Kara George—Black George, as he was called by the Turks—came down from his village of Topola in the Schumadia. He became the man of the hour. The magic of his name, and all the strange qualities of his fiery character, are dear to the heart of the Servian, who sees in this Kara George the first native of Servia who placed the laurels of a conqueror on his brow. His was a surly countenance; in truth, writ large on it was resolution and intelligent energy, qualities of a man morose and taciturn, of gloomy and reserved demeanour, but one who had learned military discipline as a volunteer in the Austrian service. He accepted the honourable and onerous post offered by his countrymen, and published the famous proclamation calling on the whole Servian nation to rise in arms. He declared that the Turks, who had failed to conquer him in spring and summer, would certainly not conquer him in a winter campaign. The Serbs, rising to the occasion, fought with heroism. After eight days' siege the Turks were driven off.

At this moment we first hear of Milan Obrenovitch, the Voyvode, or General, of Rudneek, who was





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KING MILAN IN COURT DRESS.

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entrusted with a mission to Vienna. For nine years Kara George had governed, a National Assembly had been formed, and the iron of the "Verhovni Vozd," "the Supreme Leader," had kept the Turks at bay.

But in 1813 the mighty fighter was shorn of his strength; his own pre-eminence was exciting the envy of the great military chiefs, and Turkey seized the opportunity of proclaiming a holy war. The hero of a hundred fights made a strenuous appeal to his people, praying "God to put courage into the hearts of Servia's sons." But his appeal was in vain. He lost heart and fled into his own mountains.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the heat and fury of these disputes the White City stood alone, threatened by the spoiling hand of aliens. But the spirit of the Servian has been compared to the Scottish Highlander. If he delights in plaintive music and soft poetry, he also loves to romance on the glory of past battles where Kara George was the hero. The Servians looked round for a new champion, and found hope in Milosh Obrenovitch. In the darkest hour of his country he did not desert her. These two, Kara George and Milosh Obrenovitch, were respectively the peasant ancestors of Prince Peter Karageorgevitch, who has

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now been proclaimed King, and of the dead King Alexander.

Milosh accepted the call. Again the streets ran with blood. But the clear, strong mind of the Voyvode of Takovo was conceiving a new resurrection for his country, and again Peace like a white dove spread her wings over Servia. It was secured to his country by the personal heroism of Milosh and the prudence of his policy.

But the fiery soul of Kara George could not endure to see one of his subordinate Voyvodes to be the master of the country. The echo of the tragedy of blood and war has come down to us, and our ears yet tingle with the news of the murder of Alexander and Draga. Always the cypress was to bloom like an everlasting emblem of death over that fair city, and Kara George had determined to return. The Pasha of Belgrade sent for Milosh, and pointed out that peace would be disturbed. Milosh sent imploring messages to Kara George not to return. But Kara George refused to listen. He was determined to regain his place in the hearts of his people and to sit upon the throne now held by his descendant.

One may picture the scene in the dead of the night when the Mayor of Semendria Vouitza opened

his doors and saw Black George standing before him. He dared not give him the shelter which was forbidden by the Vizier. Milosh had written to him already, reproaching him with preparing a public welcome to Kara George. And so the latter passed to a treacherous death. This was the first great internal feud of the people; at one time they united in shouting, "Obrenovitch!" at another, "Kara George!" A tornado of feeling must have torn the mind of the mayor of Vouitza. But he was afraid for himself, and perhaps saw a menace to the country, which was at least wisely ruled by Milosh. Forgetting the old ties of friendship and the duties of a host, he murdered Kara George as he slept.

O City of Death and Terror! the curse which was uttered by that King, the father of Dushan, who was throttled to death, has been fulfilled, the thunder of the prophecy has echoed down to this day of June, 1903! No one knows whether Milosh was free from the dark imputation of having connived at this crime. So dreadful a truth is hidden; but the blood of the chief leader of the first Servian Revolution was disloyally shed by a Serb on Servian ground.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was during the reign of Milosh that we first

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hear of Queen Draga's great-grandfather, Lunyevitza. He was a rich merchant who successfully trafficked in pigs, which form an important produce of the country. Evil-tongued gossip, to defame the Queen, has spoken of him as a common swineherd, but there is no truth in the story. A man of great patriotism, Milosh called on him again and again for large sums of money to enable him to buy ammunition from Hungary. So highly did he think of his services that he bestowed on him the courtesy title of Voyvode, or General, and entered with him into the old covenant of blood brotherhood. The bond was considered sacred and indissoluble; it constituted an offensive and defensive treaty to help each other throughout life. It is interesting to remember that it was entirely owing to this long-standing tie of friendship that Queen Draga made her pitiful claim for help to Queen Natalie. Little did the swine-merchant imagine that the pretty little dark-haired maiden, his grandchild, who ran about barefoot, would one day occupy the throne of the Queen.

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THE LATE KING MILAN I. OF SERBIA.

(From a painting in the possession of His Excellency the Servian Minister.)

BroU



*Short History of the Karageorgevitch and Obrenovitch  
Dynasties.*

1804. "*Kara George. George Petrovitch*, called by the Servians 'Tzrni Gyorgye,'" and by the Turks Kara George, on account of his gloominess of character, shortness of speech, and readiness to kill. A peasant of Shumadiya (the Forest Land), born in the village of Vischevatz, settled in the village of Topola, both in the centre of Servia. Chosen by the people to be "Verhovni Vozd," Head Leader. The invasion of the Turks in 1813 sent him into political exile in Kisheneff.
- 1813-14. Milosh Obrenovitch then became Leader.
1817. Kara George returned and was murdered.
1830. Turkey permits title of Prince. Milosh becomes Prince Obrenovitch I.
1839. Milosh abdicates in favour of Milan Obrenovitch II., who dies and is succeeded by Michael Obrenovitch III., his brother.
1842. Prince Michael abdicates. Alexander, son of Black George, elected Prince. Alexander compelled to resign in 1859. Prince Michael Obrenovitch III. reigns until his murder in June 1868. Succeeded by his great-nephew, Milan Obrenovitch IV. Milan abdicates, 1889, in favour of his son, King Alexander Obrenovitch V., murdered June 10th, 1903.
1903. Peter Karageorgevitch, son of Alexander Karageorgevitch, succeeds.

## CHAPTER III.

### AUTONOMY.

THE return of peace was like a new dawn for the White City. She rose again resplendent in the light of peace. It seemed that prosperity and comparative order had at last returned. Milosh had cause to congratulate himself that the country was recuperating under his rule. The agriculture and commerce of Servia suddenly rose into importance. The export of cattle and swine increased. Servian acorns, the product of a particular species of oak, and of great value for the tanning and dyeing of leather, were exported in large quantities; and as a natural result the finances showed marked signs of improvement. Good roads and bridges were constructed, schools were established in every town and village, and new churches were erected. But the freedom which Servia had acquired at the expense of so much suffering could only be ensured by the possession of military as well as commercial resources. In

order to limit her independence as much as possible, the Government of Turkey had stipulated that no military stores should be introduced into the country. But the discovery of saltpetre, and the possession of extensive forests abounding in material for charcoal, enabled Servia to manufacture supplies of gunpowder for herself. The people of Servia were trained in the use of weapons, the material for which was supplied by the iron-mines of the country. The importation of military stores was no longer necessary. A select number of officers was sent every year to be trained at Liège, and they returned equipped with the knowledge necessary for superintending all the processes of casting and polishing cannon-shot, of making shells, and fixing the fusees to the carcasses.

Milosh himself was a shrewd man of business, and he determined to become truly the Father of his People. For a round sum he bought from the Turks the right of direct taxation, the proceeds of which now flowed into the national treasury. A further source of revenue was found in the customs which were levied on the Austrian frontier. In the year 1826 Prince Milosh instituted the "Senate." His thoughts were centred on gaining internal

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autonomy for Servia ; but again and again he was prevented from securing this vital concession. For when asked to send a Commission to Constantinople, his deputies were arrested, owing to the fact that Russia had declared war against Turkey. The Porte flatly declined to treat. But the time had come when Servia was tired of being the pawn of the Powers. In 1829, Turkey, brought to submission by Russia, pledged herself to fulfil the demands of Servia.

It is pleasant to pause and consider a picture no longer grimly coloured with scarlet. The natural gaiety of the Servian temperament was once more able to vent itself. When the firman was communicated to the National Assembly, Milosh made a great speech. It is to him that the young King whose murder has horrified Europe owed his throne ; and it seems hard to believe that the people who called him the "Father of the Fatherland" could permit in 1903 the assassination of the boy who had smiled in their midst as the little "Sasha." \*

The advent of autonomy was celebrated by a great *fête*. What a sight must have been the White City, all dark deeds forgotten, as Milosh appeared

\* Pet name for Alexander.



ARCHBISHOP INNOCENTIUS.

2701

wearing on his breast the portrait of the Sultan in diamonds. His heart must have swelled with triumph in the knowledge that his country owed so much to him and that the name of the first Obrenovitch would be associated with the foundation of a reigning dynasty. And then ensued a scene of national rejoicing. The women came out to dance in the sun, with roses in their hands, their heads covered with veils and gold and silver coins; and the songs of the country were sung as only women can sing them. A great day for Servia! A day of strange memories for the new generation which has witnessed that fatal 11th of June, when another Obrenovitch panted out his life within hearing of his people.

\* \* \* \* \*

The reign of progress and peace continued undisturbed, outwardly at least, until 1832. That year saw the zenith of the power of Milosh. But then again internal agitations began to disturb the unhappy country of Servia. The blood of Kara George cried out against the blood of Obrenovitch. The Army was divided between two parties, radicals and loyalists, and began to breed vipers of discord. The deep intrigues of politicians who outwardly professed

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allegiance to Prince Milosh were festering sores of personal greed and ambition. The famous framing of the Constitution occupied all the energies of Milosh. But the question arose how would Russia and Turkey accept these drastic measures? Baron Rickmann, the newly appointed Russian agent in Bucharest, was a proud and arrogant man, and around him the party hostile to Milosh began to gather. Two bitter enemies of Milosh, Simitch and Protitch, took every opportunity to foully misrepresent him to Turkey. Hence it came about that the Porte and Russia combined to limit the power of the Prince. The nation was beginning to murmur, just as it was taught to murmur against young King Alexander, that its liberties were being stolen and that Prince Milosh had become an autocrat. At this moment it happened that the English Government appointed as its agent a certain Colonel George Hodges, a man of a handsome appearance, an attractive personality, and a persuasive manner. He advised Prince Milosh to get the control of the National Assembly into his own hands, and to see that the members were chosen by himself. Here history again repeats itself. Alexander also desired this power ; but because Draga inspired him the people murmured. The end,



however, was not to be averted. After twenty years of rule, after having snatched Servia at the point of the sword from the rapacity of her foes, after standing alone after the flight of Black George, Milosh could not submit to be ruled by the upstarts whom he had helped to raise. In June, 1839, a month fatal in the history of Belgrade, the old Prince was forced to abdicate in favour of his second son, Prince Michael.\*

No longer the sound of the grand war songs, or the vision of women in bright raiment with roses in their hands, or the acclamation of an adoring multitude! The scene had changed. There was silence in the discontented crowds as the white-haired old chief departed like a King from the people he had served so well. There was a rush to the side of the river as he made his way more with the air of a conqueror than as a deposed Prince. There was the same fine old spirit of the Obrenovitch which has been forgotten by the present nation, the same spirit of defiance and courage which made young King Alexander kiss Draga in the face of his enemies,

\* As a matter of form the eldest son, Milan, was elected. But he was in a dying condition, so it is doubtful if he was even aware that he was made Head of the State for the space of about two weeks.

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and which did not heed the resentment of monarchies.

It is ~~is~~ that spirit which will outlive time and the insults of the conspirators who would have all nations forget an ~~an~~ Obrenovitch and all that he had done.

\* \* \* \* \*



PRINCE MILOSH OBRENOVITCH.

3700

## CHAPTER IV.

### PLOTS AND COUNTER-PLOTS.

THE peasantry in the fields, the men of the mountains, and the people in the towns thought constantly now of Milosh Obrenovitch in his exile. The abrogation of the National Assembly was another cause contributing to the discontent. In dread of their own despot Milosh, as he was now called, and yet hurried like sheep to the slaughter, they were terrorised and cajoled by the new Constitution! The Russian agent and the Pasha of Belgrade figuratively touched glasses together while they praised and flattered the rebels. All the Obrenovitch party were banished and dismissed. Russia having worked zealously for her own ends, invited the widow of Kara George to come over to Servia, accompanied by her son. Never in the whole course of European history has a battle of jealousy been so fanned and fostered and made use of by other Powers. Later on, up to the present moment, in July, 1903, we shall see

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the subtle and intricate mind of Russia controlling events.

The uneducated, happy-go-lucky peasantry cared for little else so long as the taxes were moderate and their land was not taken from them. If, as they had been taught to believe, Milosh had tried to rule despotically, nevertheless some chose to remember him as the "Father," while others drank their wine to the toast of Kara George, forgetting how Kara George had deserted them in former years. Restless and unstable, stricken by constant fears, Servia began to feel the yoke of Russia already galling the neck. But it was too late. Austria, England, and France began to regret that they had stood aloof. A growing admiration and respect was manifest in the political world for a people whose virtues had not been destroyed by four centuries of oppression, and for whom a splendid future still seemed possible. It is a strange drama that stands revealed. Sometimes the setting of the scene presents a harmony of colour, where all the happiest and most joyous traits are developed, and a little Garden of Eden appears for a moment among the nations. There may be found the fruitful blossoms of the pear and the cherry and the vine, hedges bright

with honeysuckle and clematis, natural streams and rivers, and mineral wealth hidden in the mountains. But the scene is marred by the serpent of political intrigue. The storms of violence, failure, and final doom rush over the sky in clouds of gloom. Can you not picture how the exile loved his country, how his strong old heart beat in anguish when he knew that the peasants were becoming accustomed to the change in dynasty, that the name of Obrenovitch was being covered with undeserved contempt, whilst that of the first Kara George, and the son he had left behind him, was extolled?

The uplifting of the political curtain fascinates the onlooker, who holds his breath as he images the stealthy swift march of the Porte, which was already creating a strong Turkish party. One can picture the wife of Prince Milosh on her knees entreating him importunately to put forth the claims of her surviving son, Prince Michael. The Prince, indeed, was very young; but he had gallant intentions and was endowed with a strong character. He set out for his country; and at a critical moment the widow of Kara George died. The generous and noble young Prince ordered her funeral to be celebrated with the greatest pomp, the Princess

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Lyubitza, his mother, actually accompanying the coffin. But even in that hour the secret enemies of the young Obrenovitch took care to whisper to the people there was yet a Karageorgevitch to reign, if there was no Prince Michael.

It would be tedious to relate in detail all the events of Prince Michael's short reign—the appointment of Alexander Karageorgevitch, his deposition, the great return of Milosh to gather up the reins in his old age, the crowds that followed him, to find him, with his self-reliance and resolution, as strong as ever, and finally his death in 1860, leaving Prince Michael for the second time the reigning Prince.

Only eight years later and again the ominous appearance of June on the land—the month which always seems to have been associated with the conclusion of each act in the drama. Prince Michael Obrenovitch had married Princess Julia, the favourite maid-of-honour to the Empress of Austria. This lady was the daughter of Count Hunyadyt, a descendant of the famous Hungarian King Mathaeas, an intimate friend of the Emperor. Unfortunately she was childless, and this fact was the beginning of the trouble which ended in the Karageorgevitch plot to





PRINCE MICHAEL OBRENOVITCH.

(From a painting in the possession of His Excellency the Servian Minister.)

4000

murder Prince Michael. Princess Julia, by her winning ways and strength of character, had ably seconded the policy of her husband both in Austria and during her former residence in England. Now in silent grief she herself saw the importance of providing for the succession to the throne. The only heir in prospect was Milan, son of Milosh Obrenovitch, who was the son of Prince Milosh's brother Ephrem.\* Prince Michael had overcome the prejudices of the Servians by introducing many new reforms. Unselfish and patriotic as he was, he carried his life like water in the palm of his hand; he was dogged by spies and hired ruffians employed to murder him. The shadow crept up like a cloud on the horizon. But one day of splendour still remained for the Prince. The nation celebrated with enthusiasm the fifty years Jubilee of the day when Milosh successfully led the rising against the Turks. But the figure of Karageorgevitch loomed in the background; the rival of Obrenovitch had never given up the hope of recovering the throne.

The day of June 10th, 1868, saw the White City looking her best, the gaily dressed populace passing to and fro, for apparently there was nothing

\* This Milan became the father of King Alexander.

to disturb the peace of the country. But away in the mountains a strange thing came to pass.\* Mata of Cremna, a man feared and respected for his strange powers of prophecy, rose up like one of the prophets of old, and rushed down the mountain-sides beating his breasts and crying, "Our Prince is dead! They have murdered our Prince!"

The cry of the peasant of Cremna rang through the countryside and was taken up and repeated from mouth to mouth in the city. Some thought it was the wail of a madman; and the soldiers seized the would-be prophet and threw him into prison, there to await examination. But when it was heard that the Prince had actually at that moment fallen under the treacherous blow of assassins, the whole nation was convulsed with horror. Prince Michael had received many letters warning him of his danger; notorious leaders of the Karageorgevitch party had been seen holding meetings with the enemies of the Prince. The old blood feud was stirred, and dark hints were circulated to the effect that Milosh Obrenovitch had originally caused the murder of Black George. The intrigue of a few

\* This story is a fact, and the prophecies are preserved in the Minutes of the National Assembly.

politicians grew into a general clamour against the Cabinet. But the adherents of Kara George realised that an insurrection was impossible, for Prince Michael (however unpopular his Ministers) had done so much for the cause of independence that he had become dear to the hearts of his people. The assassination of the Prince was the only sure way of confounding the loyalists.

In the consummation of the tragedy there was one startling coincidence about which much has been written and insinuated. Madame Anka Constantinovitch, mother of Katrine and cousin of the Prince, shared his cruel fate. The want of a direct heir was supposed to be a cause of great grief to Prince Michael and his wife Julia. It was no secret that the Prince, fearing the Obrenovitch Dynasty would come to an end through failure of issue, was contemplating the divorce of his wife Julia, and that Katrine, daughter of Madame Anka, had been mentioned as her probable successor. In the vaults of the church, where the coffins of King Alexander and Queen Draga have lately been placed, may still be found the remains of this "Anka, daughter of Ephrem Obrenovitch," murdered on June 10th, 1868.;

I feel I cannot do better than transcribe the account of the tragedy as given in the graphic words of Madame Elodie Mijatovich.

“Within a half-hour’s drive of Belgrade there is a park belonging to the nation called Topchidere. Here is the summer residence of the Prince and also the State Prison. Topchidere lies between low hills and is watered by the small river from which it derives its name. The surrounding heights are covered with a thick growth of oak and lime trees, a large space enclosed as a deer park. Prince Michael had caused a narrow path to be cut through these woods, and the dark shadowy walk became his most favoured summer resort. On most summer afternoons he walked there with members of his family, attended only by one adjutant and a footman. This custom of the Prince was well known to the conspirators, chief of whom was a certain Paul Radovanovitch, the attorney of Alexander Karageorgevitch. His younger brother had been condemned for forgery. Svetozar Nenadovitch, a cousin of the wife of the ex-Prince, was director of the prison and park of Topchidere, and thus, tempted by the promised reward of a large estate, was of great use in forwarding the execution of the plot. Three of



THE LATE QUEEN DRAGA OF SERBIA.



THE LATE KING ALEXANDER I. OF SERBIA.

3



the boldest conspirators were to meet the Prince suddenly, and, when the deed was done, were to notify their success by pre-arranged signals to Paul Radowanovitch, who would have a carriage waiting and hurry to Belgrade with the news. Some of his associates were to wait for him, and on his coming hasten to put to death the more resolute Ministers, and take the Government into their own hands. A list of the persons who were to replace the higher State officials had actually been drawn up, and with it the project of a new Constitution, to be proclaimed in the name of *Peter Karageorgevitch*.\* In the afternoon of this 10th of June Prince Michael drove out as usual to take his favourite promenade in the deer park. With him were his old aunt, Madame Tomaniya, and her daughter and granddaughter, the beautiful Madame Anka and Mademoiselle Katrine Constantinovitch. When they were already far advanced on the narrow wood path, they were abruptly met by four men—Radowanovitch, who had been convicted of forgery; Marics, who had killed his wife; a desperate fellow named Rogics, who had formerly been in the State service; and a third brother of Radowanovitch, a

\* Who has now ascended the throne as Peter I.

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man of notorious ferocity. These men moved aside with apparent deference as the Prince advanced, and when he had passed fired simultaneously. Prince Michael fell forward and died almost instantly; Madame Anka was mortally wounded, and died about two hours later, still insensible. When the deed was done, and the preconcerted signal had been given, Paul Radowanovitch hastened to carry the news to the city. In order to be quite sure of the Prince's death, and maddened, as such ferocious beasts are said to be, with the sight of blood, the assassins had lost the aid of minutes invaluable to the successful completion of their scheme by the manner in which they cut and slashed the dead bodies.\* Forty-five knife wounds were counted on the corpse of the Prince. Subsequently the carriage of Paul Radowanovitch broke down on the way to the city, and the news of the deed reached Belgrade before him. When he arrived he found the whole city in horrified and indignant excitement, and the garrison under arms."

The War Minister, M. Petrovitch Blaznavatz,

\* According to M. C. De Previgand's account of the assassination of King Alexander and Queen Draga, the same bloodthirsty spirit was revealed in the later tragedy.

became master of the situation. He had been an intimate friend of Prince Michael, his confidant and counsellor. It was due to his prompt resolution that the reins of government were not snatched by hands red with the blood of an innocent Prince. Meanwhile the populace of Belgrade remembered the prophecy of the peasant, the record of which has been preserved up to the present time. A close examination proved beyond doubt that he had had no previous knowledge or warning of the conspiracy. Predictions and romantic lore have ever held a strange place in the history of Servia, with its superstitious belief in old folk tales and legends. The peasants and gypsies are held in repute, owing to the gallant service which they performed during the wars. Servian children learn from the lips of their nurses the legendary stories of the people of the mountains, and these are transmitted from generation to generation. The peasant of Cremna, on coming before the courts, uttered many other predictions, which have been preserved in Belgrade, though not popularly remembered.

It was during the first dissolution of the Assembly in 1875, for which His Excellency the Servian Minister was personally responsible, that he was

accosted by a brother deputy with the following words :

“ Ah, Chedo ! these prophecies come true even to the events which have occurred to-day ! ”

The Minister, astonished, inquired of his friend what he meant.

“ Do you not know that before the hour of Prince Michael's assassination the prophecy was brought from the mountains, and it is believed to have had the power of saving the political situation ? ”

The Minister, impressed with the conversation, replied that that very night, when he would be dining with the Prince, he would bring the matter before his notice.

When he questioned the Prince concerning the predictions, His Highness replied that he had no knowledge of the matter, but eventually it was found that a record had been entered in the Minutes of the State. It is a strange but incontestable fact that one by one these predictions are being fulfilled, and the incident finds a parallel in the warning sent by the present Minister to King Alexander in March, 1903, a full account of which will be found in the Appendix.

The murder of Prince Michael was received with grief and lamentation by the people. He was



QUEEN NATALIE.  
(Mother of King Alexander.)

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remembered as their gallant and handsome Prince, the poet whose songs of love and war they had sung, a man of honour and open-handed generosity. During his life his quiet and somewhat stern demeanour had prevented much enthusiasm, but the real devotion of the nation was manifested when he was interred in the Cathedral at Belgrade. Long before, when the Prince had been urged to return and banish Alexander Karageorgevitch, and enter into a plot repugnant to his nature, he had uttered the memorable words—“*I will never come through blood to the Throne.*”

His motto was, “*Tempus et meum Jus.*” Time brought it about that he was sincerely and passionately mourned by his people, but Right was overthrown by the wrong of a murderous plot and a culpable ambition. Had Prince Michael lived, the harvest already sown would have been reaped. But the fruit was never to ripen. Once again the Servians were convulsed by internal strife; and the dark angel of retribution yet waits with folded wings. The bitter potion of remorse will be drunk to the dregs. On the tomb of Prince Michael Obrenovitch his widow has inscribed the lines, “*Tvoja missao poginuti netye!*” “Thy thought will not perish!”

## CHAPTER V.

### THE HEAD THAT WEARS A CROWN.

WHAT does the world at large really know about the Prince Milan Obrenovitch who now ascended the throne? The venom of political intrigue has poisoned his name, so that at one time it was no uncommon thing for people in England and abroad to speak of the "infamous King Milan." The superfine threads of Russian and Turkish politics drew their meshes round the world, the most part of which reads with avidity the history of Court scandals. People wilfully blinded their eyes to the inner truths of a story which throughout should rouse the deep pity of humanity at the colossal wreckage surrounding the throne of Servia.

Prince Michael had left behind him elements of an excellent Government. He had been wont to give without arrogance, to receive with dignity. The



Government made no attempt to shield the conspirators, who were at once seized and imprisoned. An Assembly met to express the sorrow of the nation and sentiments of loyalty and sympathy for the young Milan Obrenovitch. The latter now gained that which the old peasant ruler Milosh had long cherished as a dream to guard against future catastrophe—a law was passed securing the hereditary dignity of Prince of Servia to the male descendants of the family of the Obrenovitch. In the case of failure of male heirs in the direct line, the succession was to pass to the male descendants of the daughter of Prince Milosh. In a significant clause the Assembly decreed that Kara-georgevitch and his descendants should be *excluded for ever*.

As the young Prince Milan was only fourteen years of age, three Regents were appointed to conduct the Government. They had an arduous task to prevent a disturbance of the public peace, and, as affairs then stood, it was no easy matter to unite the Conservatives and Radicals.

On August 10th, 1872, the young Prince attained his majority. The Regents gave up their responsible and difficult charge with the conviction that the

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country had not deteriorated under their rule. The young Prince had been educated in Paris, in the house of the well-known philosopher and democrat, Monsieur Huet ; and later in Belgrade he had been taken in hand by a Ragusan nobleman and poet, Count Medo de Pozzo. He began his rule with the magnificent possibilities of a nature calculated to make a brilliant soldier, a subtle statesman, and a man lovable for his personal qualities. Moreover, he was possessed of a latent power of character which was yet to be revealed. The sneers and the pity which accompanied his later sins and his follies had not yet touched him, and the stream of life looked clear as crystal to his enthusiastic gaze. He did not look at the thundering cataract which lay behind, and might threaten to overwhelm him at any moment. Secure as he seemed in the love of his people, adored by his soldiers, he had not realised that he held his throne under the crushing supervision of Russian ambition. This young man of culture and reckless bravery stood prepared to fight the barbaric savage element which was ultimately to be his ruin.

It was in the spring of 1875 that the beautiful Natalie, daughter of a Moldavian noble and a



ARCHBISHOP THEODOSIUS.  
(Who pronounced the Divorce between Queen Natalie and King Milan.)

4700

Roumanian princess, first entered into the life of King Milan.

She met him in Vienna, and the influence of his mother, Hélène Catargi, and his own inclinations united to bring about his marriage. Even then, at the age of sixteen, she was described as having a perfectly developed figure, exquisite neck and arms, with lustrous brown eyes, luxuriant hair, and gleaming white teeth. But her smile, some said, betrayed her inner nature. She was a woman who never forgave. Pride and cruelty were integral parts of her character. Her temper embroiled the Court in perpetual domestic discord. At all times, Natalie the wife, Natalie divorced, Natalie the widow, was the talk of the town. Our sympathy is not for this young woman in the zenith of her beauty, jealous and tactless, and far from being a moral help to her husband; but for Natalie, the mother of the "Sasha," the only bond between King and Queen. For Milan dearly loved his little "Alexander." There must be hours now full of touching remembrance to this lovely Queen, sitting in her château, and gazing at the pictures of her bright-eyed, high-spirited boy, who lies in his tomb at Belgrade; terrible visions, which must awaken the

grief and fears of her heart ; for little did she realise that Russian policy had deliberately fanned the discord between her and the King whenever he inclined towards friendship with Austria.

“ Surely,” said a great lady to her once when, in tigerish fury, she confessed that she knew the King had betrayed her—“ surely there is a time in every married woman’s life when she must learn to forgive !”

There was much excuse for the King, who saw everywhere around him the Oriental ideas of marriage—there was much excuse. He had married a girl of sixteen—a girl dazzled, perhaps, with the thought of a throne, who did not realise that her motto ought to be, “ Union is strength.” The greatest passions are common to all, and the scenes in the Palace could not be concealed from a world which fastened on the ugly cancer of a King’s immorality. The papers teemed with insulting comments ; the disaffected represented the Queen as a martyr ; and Russia looked and laughed when a Minister’s wife had fascinated the susceptible heart of the King. At all costs his polygamous desires should be made the weapon for his own destruction. The savage elements in his blood urged him on till his passions

became ungovernable. But though marked by the fierce love of power and reckless ambition, he still possessed his earlier characteristics of valour and devotion. Milan is described by Emile De Lavelèye, who knew him in Paris, as "a superb cavalier, very tall and strong." Think what it must have been to the young Queen to discover in him a gambler and a *roué*. Wild with passion, tormented with jealousy, she filled the air with her outcry, until he swore he would divorce her on the ground of incompatibility of temperament. The Archbishop Michael, much to his credit, refused to uphold the King. The Queen urged on her husband the importance of being supported by Russia. It was their political and private disputes which created such a tornado of ill-feeling. And yet what a couple they made—she with her superb presence, her warm, dazzling complexion, and large velvet Wallachian eyes, and he with his virile personality and handsome air! A strain of intense pathos runs through this story of the father and mother. A Belgrade diplomatist describes the little "Sasha" bounding into the room at the Palace before dinner, full of life, beaming with fun, his brown eyes sparkling with his mother's beauty and his father's intelligence.

Both parents saw in him the fulfilment of their hopes and the realisation of a great destiny. They indulged in golden dreams for his future—now he was to become Emperor of Constantinople, and now he was to place on his head an ancient crown and become the founder of a new Empire. Little did they think that the object of their illusions would be a murdered King!

It is more pleasant to dwell on an amusing picture—that of King Milan addressing his people at the Assembly, with one of his Ministers at his side, and a little figure creeping in and whispering, “Tell Papa he talks too much. I want him!”

But the King's greatest fault was his fondness for the company of women. There was one in particular, Artemisa Cristitch, daughter of a Greek, who was architect to the Sultan, and whose illegitimate son is now, they say, being brought up in Constantinople. All the passionate expostulations and tears of Natalie could not prevent Milan from continuing this ignoble intrigue. Never was man more cursed with a dual nature. Here was a fine soldier and an indulgent father who at the same time neglected all the domestic ties commonly held sacred.

Now at this time Prince Nicholas of Montenegro,





QUEEN NATALIE WITH HER SON ALEXANDER AT THE AGE OF THREE.

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a born leader of men and popular with the nation, was aspiring to the throne. Russia was urging the Prince of Servia to declare war against Turkey, until at length he reluctantly complied. Although he suffered reverses in the war which ensued, he was still urged forward by Russia, who cajoled him with numberless promises. Milan made every effort to arouse enthusiasm. "The defence of the holy cause passed into stronger hands," he said. He invoked the names of the old heroes of Kossova.\* But after he had been induced to quarrel with the Porte, he was betrayed by Russia, who dictated terms and calmly gave away Old Servia to Bulgaria. This was the way in which the magnificent promises of Russia were kept! Milan was furious to discover that he had been used as a cat's-paw; and when, in spite of Natalie's entreaties, he threw himself into the arms of the Austrian Government, his ruin was assured. His intrigue with Artemisa Cristitch was magnified by his enemies; his name was exposed to universal ridicule; and Natalie, whose whole sympathy was with Russia, was so infuriated by his infidelity, that she rejoiced to see a flood of abuse sweep over the

\* A translation of one of these Kossova war poems by Madame Elodie Mijatovich will be found on pp. 112-15.

throne. In that moment she forgot the interests of her little son, whose future would also be ruined by the desertion of Russia.

In the midst of this cauldron of intrigue and misery there are one or two bright incidents which relieve the picture. "Sasha" was loved by the people. He knew nothing of the dissensions between his father and mother, he had a bright, happy-go-lucky character, and he was happy in his innocence. There are two stories worth quoting which present him as a little boy full of glee, dancing about on the boat which descended the river on the occasion of the official progress of the King and Queen to the Shabatz. While one of the Ministers was holding him in two arms so that he should not fall, he mischievously drew off one of the Minister's gloves and threw it in the water. Natalie scolded him when she noticed that he was again stealthily drawing off the second glove. Full of fun, he laughed and said, "One is useless! let both go, mamma." Shortly afterwards another steamer met the boat, and as it came alongside there were many cheers and shouts of greeting.

"Why do these people make so much noise when they see me?" cried little Alexander.

"Because they love you, my little son."

Immediately he almost sprang out of the Minister's arms, calling out, "They say you love me: show me your love by throwing all your hats into the water."

The hats were thrown!

It was only a few years afterwards that he was miserably hacked to death in the Palace; and then there were none to express regret.

Before Alexander was twelve years of age a violent rupture took place between Milan and Natalie. Archbishop Michael had been sent away and Theodosius held his office. It was he who pronounced the divorce between the King and Queen. It was Innocensius who married Draga Maschine and King Alexander, and afterwards it was he who blessed the murderers in the Cathedral, and welcomed King Karageorgevitch.

After the divorce had been pronounced, Natalie was ordered to leave the country. But although her son was virtually separated from her, she refused to go. Already the personality of Milan had lost its former power of fascination. The Queen openly gave vent to her hatred, for he had committed an action which she could never forgive. But in

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spite of this, the plots of the Pretender Karageorgevitch so alarmed them both that a reconciliation was effected in order to save the throne for their son, and Archbishop Michael was called upon to cancel the divorce.

But once again the hydra of Republicanism raised its heads. Progressives and Radicals supported the cause of Karageorgevitch, while Milan found no favour with the Powers. Scandal after scandal about his private conduct found its way into the newspapers. Those who knew him intimately felt that he was tired out and disheartened by constant domestic strife and the peril of his position. Finally, it was pointed out to him that the only chance of saving the throne for the little "Sasha" lay in his own abdication; and accordingly, on the night of March 6th, 1889, the King had a farewell audience of his personal friends and his Ministers. There was no hope in his heart save that for the future success of his little "Sasha."

After the formal abdication, Milan left the country, and Regents were appointed to act during the minority of the young Alexander. The parting between father and son revealed the crowning act of unselfishness in the life of the former. And yet



COLONEL MASCHINE.  
(Brother-in-law to Queen Draga.)

9700



later on, when "Sasha" was under the dominating influence of Draga Maschine, he ordered his father to be shot if he stepped over the frontier. When the news reached King Milan it broke his heart. It was hard for him to believe that the boy whom he had loved could become a despot and even a parricide. Shortly after Milan died at Vienna in comparatively poor circumstances. And then for a moment the action in the drama of Servian history moved less quickly. The fierce violence of its feuds was now to be mingled with the intrigues of a woman, Draga Maschine, who was soon to occupy a prominent place on the stage of the Servian Throne.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE RISE OF DRAGA.

AFTER the abdication of Milan, Queen Natalie was completely separated from her son. The château she had bought at Biarritz became her home, and there she dragged out a solitary and bitter existence. Her pride had been wounded to the quick; she felt herself insulted and outraged. Instead of the life she had once dreamt of living with King Milan, she had experienced nothing but passionate quarrels and enmities. Many were the letters she wrote to her gentle and studious son. Even at the age of thirteen he had shown signs of firmness and self-reliance. His education had been carried on by private tutors in the Palace of Belgrade, and General Mishkovitch had been appointed as his governor. But the quarrels between his father and mother had poisoned the most impressionable years of his life. Before he was fourteen he was left to himself, and to the *entourage* of officers and other

companions, who were not the most desirable models for a young Prince. Even in those days there was a young woman living unpretentiously in Belgrade of whose existence he then knew nothing. This was none other than Draga Maschine, wife of a clever engineer who was first clerk in a Government office, and afterwards Secretary to the Mining Department of the Ministry of Finances. This young engineer, a brother of Colonel Maschine, was a man of considerable ability, possessed of a keen determination to rise in his profession. To him Draga was married before she was seventeen. Even then she had the reputation of being something more than a flirt, though this was perhaps due to the boasts of swaggering lovers who invented calumnies about a lady who rose rapidly to social eminence. But there is no material for judging about this early period of her life. It is sufficient to say that the first imputation on her character arose from the suicide of her husband a year after their marriage. Colonel Maschine, who was always her enemy and had been devoted to his brother, swore he would be avenged on her for conduct which he said had broken his brother's heart. Certain it is that there was an inner tragedy in the life of this

young woman ; she had the alluring charm which has belonged to a few women who have held in their hands the destiny of nations. Her eyes, we are told, were the "eyes of night" ; her hair was raven black, soft as silk, and rippling in profusion. She had clear ivory skin, a small mouth, and a jaw which indicated her decision of character. It was her fixed ambition to rise from the poverty into which she was plunged. The Maschines left her to herself. Those few years were full of that terrible struggle under temptation which is swiftly offered to a young and beautiful woman who suffers under poverty.

Perhaps she had all the yearnings for a higher life denied to her in the loose set in which she lived. At any rate her worst enemy must admit that she was faithful to the King from the moment of their first illicit union. She had no mind to sink into the gutter ; and one can see her subtle brain revolving schemes for the improvement of her circumstances. She remembered that she was the descendant of Lunyevitza, the merchant who dealt in swine and filled the coppers of Milosh. Nor did she forget that the fiery old prince had taken Lunyevitza into the bond of blood brotherhood.



NIKOLA LUNYEVITZA.  
(Queen Draga's second brother.)

U.S. GOVERNMENT  
PRINTING OFFICE

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Though he had been necessary to Servia, she was left to starve. Using her power of fascination, she sought an interview with one of the Ministers, who suggested that she should become a governess.

"A governess—I!" exclaimed Draga. "Why, I know nothing to teach." And so she waited, knowing that her only equipment was her determination, her ambition, and her beauty. The Minister suggested he would lay the case before the Queen, with a view to securing her a small pension; and one may picture her elation when she was informed that Queen Natalie would help her and take her into her service as one of her ladies-in-waiting. This is one of the most pathetic incidents of the whole story—the heart of the Queen going out to help a woman who threw herself on her mercy.

Draga now moved in the atmosphere of a Court, although it was only the little Court of a broken-hearted woman separated from her son. She left Belgrade, delighted to enter a life where she could have all the courtesies and graces of manner befitting a lady-in-waiting. And besides, who might she not meet as lady-in-waiting to Natalie? The scandals and contempt which had grown up round her name

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she left behind in Belgrade; there, too, she left the legacy of Colonel Maschine's hatred and suspicion. When she returned to Belgrade, a few years later, she was already approaching the throne. For that she was prepared to fight by dint of intrigue and sacrifice such as would not be credited in fiction. A story of a prophecy given at this time is worth relating. It is vouched for on the very highest authority. In 1897, the year after the first meeting between Draga and King Alexander, Queen Natalie in a playful mood suggested to Madame Draga and to Mademoiselle Tzanka that they should accompany her to visit a certain Madame De Thèbes, a lady who had a reputation as a clairvoyante and palmiste in Paris. Queen Natalie asked this Madame De Thèbes to read what the future had in store for her son and for those around herself.

"Madame," replied the lady, "you nourish in your bosom a viper which will turn and sting you. Can you guess what I mean?"

She went on to say that the whole destiny of Servia rested on the young King's marriage. The Queen nodded assent, knowing that Russia desired his alliance with the beautiful Princess who is now sister-in-law to the Queen of Italy. Next,



Mademoiselle Tzanka was informed that she would be loved, but would never marry.

“And I! what is there for me?” cried Madame Draga.

Slowly and impressively Madame De Thèbes uttered these remarkable words: “You, Madame, will rise to a higher position than you have even imagined. One day you will even reign a Queen; but when that day dawns your life will be in danger, and you will drag your lover and your husband to his ruin and his death!”

This incident occurred in 1897, and in the following year Madame Draga met the young King. Three years later Mademoiselle Tzanka was threatened with severe punishment for having repeated the story, which found its way into many of the papers. Queen Draga was furious; it was in vain that the story was vigorously denied; it was fastened upon and exaggerated by the superstition of the people. The seed which was to bear such terrible fruit seemed to have been sown by a few thoughtless words spoken by Mademoiselle Tzanka. Later, when the shadows of the coming storm lengthened, when she suffered the reproaches of Natalie and the hatred and scorn of her people, Queen Draga

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remembered the warning of ruin and degradation. But we have first the opening page of a love-story, the passion of a young man who laid his crown at her feet, who forgot the political alliance proposed by Russia and the welfare of his people for the sake of the eyes of Draga Maschine, for the wooing tones of a woman who carried death in her whisper of love.



GENERAL LAZAR PETROWITCH.

(Aide-de-camp to King Alexander, who confronted the officers with revolver and drawn sword, and was fatally shot.)

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE PATH TO THE THRONE.

DRAGA MASCHINE had now become the cynosure of all eyes ; her personality eclipsed even that of her royal mistress, as she moved from place to place in attendance upon the Queen. It was a strange irony that Queen Natalie should thus be providing for her education and outward refinement. At every step in her advancement she seemed to become more graceful, picturesque, and imposing. Her character will loom large in history. Amid the stately panoply of Court life, she was the central figure, sordid yet tremendous in her aims, possessed of that strange quality in her, as a woman, which led Napoleon, as a man, to the consummation of a tragic scene in the drama of his life. Even the place where she met the King has about it the memory of that romance which appears in the love-story of Mademoiselle Montijo, afterwards Empress Eugénie. It was in Biarritz, a city dancing in

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the sunshine of success, mocking at the intrigues of its laughter-loving, luxurious citizens, that the Empress Eugénie spent her happiest hours. It was here, too, that Queen Victoria spent the winter in 1889. And here Natalie built a handsome château designed like an Italian palace. Within the château Queen Natalie waited with joy in her heart to welcome her son, who was coming to pay a long-delayed visit. Smouldering fires of gossip and jealousy already threatened to burst into flame around the name of Draga Maschine. Some smiled to think of the adventuress becoming a decorous lady-in-waiting ; but no one had yet dared to whisper the danger of her proximity to the King. When at last he came, young, ardent, and fired with many brave resolves, Queen Natalie laid before him her plan for an alliance with his second cousin, now Princess Lily Mirko of Montenegro. This lady, who was born a Constantinovitch, and is a member of the Obrenovitch family, is one of the most beautiful women in Europe.

Had King Alexander accepted this lady and offered her his kingdom he would never have suffered the fate which overtook him. Perhaps the fact of relationship destroyed the charm of novelty. At any

rate, on that memorable visit to Biarritz it was to the charms of Draga Maschine that Alexander succumbed. To win his heart was her first step, and she was not over-scrupulous in the means she employed. She was older and more subtle in this game of love and adventure than he. But in time she also came to love him for his loyalty to her. When her name was dragged in the mud, when his own life was at stake, he still saw in her that something of heaven and earth which is the basis of a great passion. Under the stars at Biarritz this tall, graceful woman employed all her witchery to win him to complete subjection. Neither the slights put upon her, nor the hostility of the Queen, who became alarmed at the sudden infatuation of her son, made any difference to her plan. She moved deliberately and with fixed determination towards her goal. To the sound of music—maddening Hungarian Czardas and suggestive waltzes played on the terrace—she listened to words which from loyalty to her benefactor the Queen she ought to have stifled at their birth. The Queen discovered their love; she upbraided her lady-in-waiting, and finally dismissed her with violence from her *entourage*. “Ah! that fatal woman who stole my son!” says Natalie now in her grief.

Triumphantly Draga Maschine returned to the White City, where she had spent days of poverty and humiliation. She returned to live in shame yet affluence as the mistress of the young King. But she was a Servian born; she was full of patriotism; and she was fired with the ambition to feel the political pulse beat under her own hand. Soon she became recognised as a power which was exerted secretly and behind curtains, yet a power by no means to be despised. From the moment the King had sunk at her feet as her lover, she not only gained dominion over his private life, but dictated his public acts. It was at her suggestion that King Alexander, revolver in hand, declared himself of age; that he locked up the Regents after inviting them to dinner; and seizing the reins of government, proclaimed himself ruler of Servia. Russia suddenly discovered that the young King had the old hard grip of his ancestor, and her political interests urged her to throw out a net which might entangle him for ever. Never was a plot, the story of which I am privileged to narrate, arranged with greater skill and display of blandishments.

Servia was beginning to chafe at the dominion which Draga Maschine exercised over the King.





**GENERAL PAWLOWITCH.**

**(Minister of War, killed in his own house by the officers.)**

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She brought no added lustre to his name, and the constant scandals which had brought disrepute to King Milan had signalled the beginning of reaction. Russia knew the political leanings of the pretender, Peter Karageorgevitch. She felt that at all costs it would be well to wipe out the Obrenovitch for ever. The turbulent subjects of Alexander, and especially the Army, in which Colonel Maschine still fostered his purpose of revenge, could do little except scoff while Draga remained merely the King's mistress. But if once she became a Queen, Russia knew that the doom of the Obrenovitch would be sealed. Draga Maschine herself, whether it was fear, or because she hoped to fan the King's ardour, resolutely refused to become his wife at this time. She had many enemies ; she was the butt of innumerable jealous tongues ; and voluble women breathed old and new slanders on her name.

But suddenly there arrived in Belgrade a Russian Colonel, a man of high position, who brought his wife with him. To the astonishment and indignation of society, Madame Draga Maschine was received in his house. This event became the talk of the hour, and tongues were busy with the King's *amour*. The Russian Colonel's wife was soon on terms of

close intimacy with Draga; and one day ventured to ask her the direct question, "Why do you not ask the King to marry you? He would do so, I am sure."

Draga coquetted with the question. "I am quite happy; we love one another." "Then you would not urge it upon him?" persisted the diplomatist. "No," replied Draga Maschine; but in her heart she knew that her hopes would soon be realised.

"Let me tell you a little story," said this lady, simulating the confidences of friendship. "I was a long time living with the Colonel before he married me. His family protested, and I was most unhappy, until one day I heard of an old gypsy-woman who promised me a potion which, if I administered it to him, would make him my husband. You see! all is said, I am his wife. Shall I get the potion from this old Wallachian gypsy? Ah, Madame Draga! you will have cause to rejoice, for the King will marry you, and you will be Queen of Servia."

Thus cunningly, under the disguise of a great friendship, Russia laid her snare. From that moment Draga was persistently urged to endeavour to become Queen. The potion was brought to her, her superstition and private ambition were used as tools, until

Draga, by still denying the King, fanned his love into a yet greater flame.

The clever Russian diplomatist assured the King that all-powerful Russia would recognise the marriage. Innocentius the Archbishop was consulted, and—having been assured that the Czar would consent to act as best man—volunteered to perform the ceremony. Draga should be made Queen, and should receive the blessing of the Church with all the dignity it could bestow.

The bond which made her into a Queen would unseat the King from his throne; it would alienate him from his people; it would rouse the foes and slanderers of his wife; it would pave the way for a Karageorgevitch.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

THE Archbishop Innocentius officiated at the union of Draga and King Alexander in the Cathedral at Belgrade, and bestowed upon them the blessing of the Church. The service was one in which the pomp of religious fervour blended with the importance of the occasion. Down to the minute details the ceremony suggested the ritual of the Jews—a linking together of promise and fulfilment, of type and of anti-type. There was a blaze of light and clouds of incense; beyond the dove of the sanctuary was the veil of scarlet, covering the way to the Holy of Holies; and the magnificent tones of the choir rose and fell with solemn significance. To Draga Maschine the presence of the Archbishop seemed to confirm the validity of her marriage. She herself had never thought it possible that a public proclamation would be given to the union, which, up to now, had made her the object



GENERAL ZINZAR MARKOWITZ.

(The Prime Minister, who was assassinated in his house the same night as the King and Queen.)

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of scorn and indignity. But now that she was Queen she seemed to have reached the summit of her hopes.

The King was assailed with advice and even with expostulations. To this was added the echo of accumulated slander against his wife. One cannot but admire the firmness and loyalty which at this time he evinced. Everyone remarked upon his unshaken determination; and for a time it seemed as if the resolute position which he adopted was to bear fruit. Never did a woman act with a better appearance of unconscious grace and dignity than did Queen Draga in this game of life and death.

On a memorable day the sun shone for the last time on Draga Maschine. She was looking superbly handsome when she was driven in the King's carriage to the Cathedral, where she had often sat and knelt as one of the people and gazed upon the Prince from a distance. But now she was standing by his side as his wife and his Queen. The die was cast; the irrevocable step had been taken; and the brilliant young King drove back in happiness to the Konak, whilst a wondering and jealous people could scarcely believe that so strange a union had received religious sanction.

The marriage of Draga rendered her all-powerful.

She had already acquired a complete ascendancy over the King, and her position was now assured. But she had roused against herself the bitterness of those who envied her present fortune and could not forget her past; the women were jealous of her; the men despised her. The mission of the Russian Colonel and his wife had now been fulfilled. They had placed in Draga's hand the weapon for her own destruction. She had pointed the sword at her own breast. Had she been content to remain a cypher in the political world, her terrible end might yet have been deferred and even averted. But her pride determined her to secure her hold on the future. At length the time came when she experienced the bitter agony of discovering that she would bear no heir to the throne. She even encouraged a secret plot by which an alien child might be passed off as her own. But when the Czar was asked to be godfather to the child, he sent his own physician to make investigations. The humiliating result is known to all the world. Draga was now reduced to the single ambition of being received at the Russian Court, and for this end did not scruple to employ every artifice and subterfuge. But she found her royalty was not recognised. At length she even

urged her husband to declare that he would recognise as heir-apparent a Prince of the Montenegrin family, on the condition that the royal family of Russia would receive her as Queen.

But even this counsel of despair was doomed to failure. Never did woman more passionately desire a child of her own, both to strengthen her hold on the people and to satisfy her own instincts as a mother. To secure the former object she conceived the daring plan of placing on the throne her own brother, Nicodim Lunyevitza. But this step immediately aroused a determined protest from the Ministry. The Prime Minister and his colleagues arrived at the Palace, intending to implore the King to reconsider his plans for the succession.

Alexander, accompanied by Draga, met them, and together they insisted on nominating her brother; a private interview was refused to the Ministers.

This incident was speedily followed by the suspension of the Constitution; Draga's name became the object of universal execration. As men talked they spat upon the ground, as afterwards they spat upon her corpse arrayed in the pink dress in which they buried her.

Already she was hurrying fast towards the end.

The love-tragedy was approaching the catastrophe. There grew up against Draga a ferocity which suggested the barbarism of earlier ages. The ordinary routine of Court life became a farce. Every other interest, dynastic or political, was speedily followed up in the blood-feud which was a survival of savagery in the civilised world. The result is that for the third time the rival race of Kara George reigns in the White City of Death.

There is one room in the Palace at Belgrade full of sad associations. Mirth may dwell there now, and the even pacing of the soldiery may still be heard outside—an outward show of calm and splendour. There lay the toys, broken by rude hands amid ribald laughter, which Draga bought for the heir she so passionately desired. But a little time ago blood-stained finger-marks were to be seen on the coverlid and walls.

The tragedy of Draga's life will make her name live in Servian history and legend. So strenuous a soul cannot have passed away without leaving behind her the marks of that tragic struggle of love and fear, of doubt and resolve. But clouds gather round her name as the curtain falls on the tragedy of Belgrade.



PRINCESS LILY MIRKO, NOW PRINCESS MIRKO OF MONTENEGRO.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### REVOLUTION AND MURDER.

To the world at large the assassination at Belgrade came with unexpected suddenness. But in the city itself, and even elsewhere, there were not wanting signs and omens of the coming disaster. I may pass over the strange story of that clairvoyant who spoke to Queen Natalie and her young attendant, and that equally strange story, narrated by Mr. W. T. Stead and by the Servian Minister in London, of the clairvoyant who, a month before the murder, in the presence of nine or ten witnesses assembled in a London restaurant, foretold the death of Queen Draga. To those who were in the secrets of some of the Liberals and Radicals in Belgrade the end could have been foreseen, and no supernatural agency was needed to show that a revolution was impending. It is true that the King, probably inspired by his wife, cherished ambitions for the aggrandisement of his kingdom. It was his fixed policy to bring the inhabitants of Old Servia once again under his own

sovereignty, and he was anxious to rescue the Serbs of Western Macedonia from the tyranny of the Turk. But the projected rounding off of his dominions was in his mind associated with a highly centralized monarchical government at home. Alexander had thus the ambitions of a despot without the harder qualities which make despotism successful. In the last years of his life his apparent strength lay in his uxoriousness: he was the creature of his wife, the slave of the ambitions she inspired. His rule broke forth into a fever of activity which recalls the abortive energy of our own James II.

Nothing was more galling to the young King than the fetters imposed by the new Constitution. Absolutism he regarded as the inheritance of the Obrenovitch dynasty, and a constitutional Government, as he understood it, meant the negation of kingship. Though he was mainly interested in the development of a foreign policy, he set himself first to weed out the obstructions presented by the progressive parties at home. Like George III. of England, he set himself to secure a King's Party; but, like the grandfather of that monarch, he had also to fear a rival claimant to the throne. At the last General Election he secured a substantial majority;



but the electoral machinery was openly ridiculed, and the King was accused of having terrorised the electors. He had already taken the precaution of investing large sums of money in English banks. There was much discontent in the Army owing to the appointment of the King's personal friends to important posts in the service, so that the very device which he used to strengthen his control over the Army only served to weaken it. He became fearful when he realized that there was no successor to the throne: the woman who was ambitious to become the mother of kings remained childless; and it was whispered that revolution was easiest when there was only one obstacle in the path. The King frantically looked round for a successor, and at last bethought himself of his brother-in-law, Nicodim. Without hesitation he began to lay plans for getting the Queen's brother declared Heir-Apparent by the Skupshtina.

He could have taken no step better calculated to arouse the fury of the Opposition. It was his marriage with Draga which had started the discontent against the Throne; her growing influence over him fomented it. The gossip about her former life was mixed with revolting scandals which had no shadow of foundation. The nobility never forgot that, though

of noble origin, she had been the humble wife of an engineer, the patronised attendant of Queen Natalie ; others harped upon the fact that she had been a woman of smirched reputation. M. Pashics, the leader of the Democratic Party, declared that the King's union with Draga was a moral outrage. "The King and Queen," he said afterwards, "were driving the State to its ruin." When this feeling was at its height, the King was mad enough to propose as his successor a member of the hated family of the Queen. Instantly the friends of Peter Karageorgevitch began to put their heads together ; those who had hitherto been partisans of the King remembered the Pretender residing at Geneva, who had a better claim, they thought, than this upstart Nicodim.

The discontent had now developed into a tangible conspiracy. A lady was sent to interview Karageorgevitch at Geneva, with definite instructions to propose that he should come to Servia and be received as King by the Army, with the provision that he should accept the new Liberal Constitution which had been annulled by Alexander. Peter accepted the terms, and is said to have made various promises of office and emoluments to his supporters. In Belgrade, plots were set on foot to dispose of



QUEEN DRAGA'S WARDROBE ROOM.  
(The scene of the final act in the Servian tragedy.)

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the King and Queen. In the first attempt at assassination the notorious Alavantitch was knocked on the head with a revolver by an officer of the Palace, and fell dead. A boy who served in the King's kitchen was bribed to introduce poison into a dish served before the King and Queen. He was caught in the act by the cook, and committed suicide. Six weeks before the catastrophe an officer who knew the details of the conspiracy gave warning to the King of all that was happening. Even then he clearly did not recognise the extent of his danger. With the Army against him and the people apathetic, nothing could have saved him but flight or the divorce of Draga and complete submission to the Democratic Party. As it was, he aggravated the situation by transferring those officers who were known to be concerned in the conspiracy to garrisons in the interior.

As the fatal 10th of June approached, the conspirators, confident of success, assured of the intentions of Peter Karageorgevitch, scarcely deigned to conceal their intentions. Never were so many people cognisant of a plot to murder a King. The number of officers directly implicated is variously estimated at something between eighty and one hundred and fifty, the most authentic account being

that which puts the figure at eighty-six. Colonel Maschine, a brother-in-law of the Queen, was the leading spirit; and with the help of his fellow commander, Colonel Mishitch, he had completely won over the Sixth Regiment. The King alone remained confident of his own triumph, though everyone knew that plots were in the air, and Draga herself was terrified with the consciousness of impending evil. "I am haunted by a dreadful presentiment," she wrote to a friend the day before her death, "and often at night I seem to see a terrifying picture of Michael in his death-agony, stretching his blood-stained hand towards his murderers and crying, 'Stop, my brothers! it is enough.'"

On the evening of Wednesday, June 10th, the conspirators met at the "Crown" Restaurant to discuss the final details for the invasion of the Palace. Colonel Maschine had made arrangements for co-operation within the Konak and without. The King's Adjutant, Lieutenant-Colonel Naoumovitch, who was acquainted with the movements of the royal household, had made provision for the opening of the doors and the admission of the conspirators; and he was probably provided with a form of abdication which the King would be called upon to sign. Outside



THE ROYAL BEDCHAMBER.  
(Where the Servian King and Queen were murdered.)

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the Palace the Sixth Regiment was disposed by its officers, to guard the rear of the conspirators and render assistance when called upon. Before eleven o'clock the troops had occupied the positions allotted to them, and had been joined by the group of officers who had solemnly sworn to carry their task through to the end. They made their way to the main gate of the precincts, which seems to have been opened from within, and, after a short struggle with the guard, passed through the courtyard to the inner door of the Palace. The door was opened, and with what haste they could they went in the direction of the King's apartments.

From this point the story becomes confused. According to one account, the electric light was switched off, and the officers were left in total darkness till they discovered some lighted candles in the antechamber of the King's bedroom. According to another account, the whole household was suddenly in an uproar, and the distracted officers ran up passages and staircases, hunting for the King, and killing everyone who dared to oppose them. Certainly one officer who was found in a passage was shot down on the spot, and a private who offered resistance received a bullet in his head. On the staircase the

conspirators met General Petrowitch, who held a loaded revolver in his hand.

"What do you want?" he is said to have cried.

"Show me where the King and Queen are."

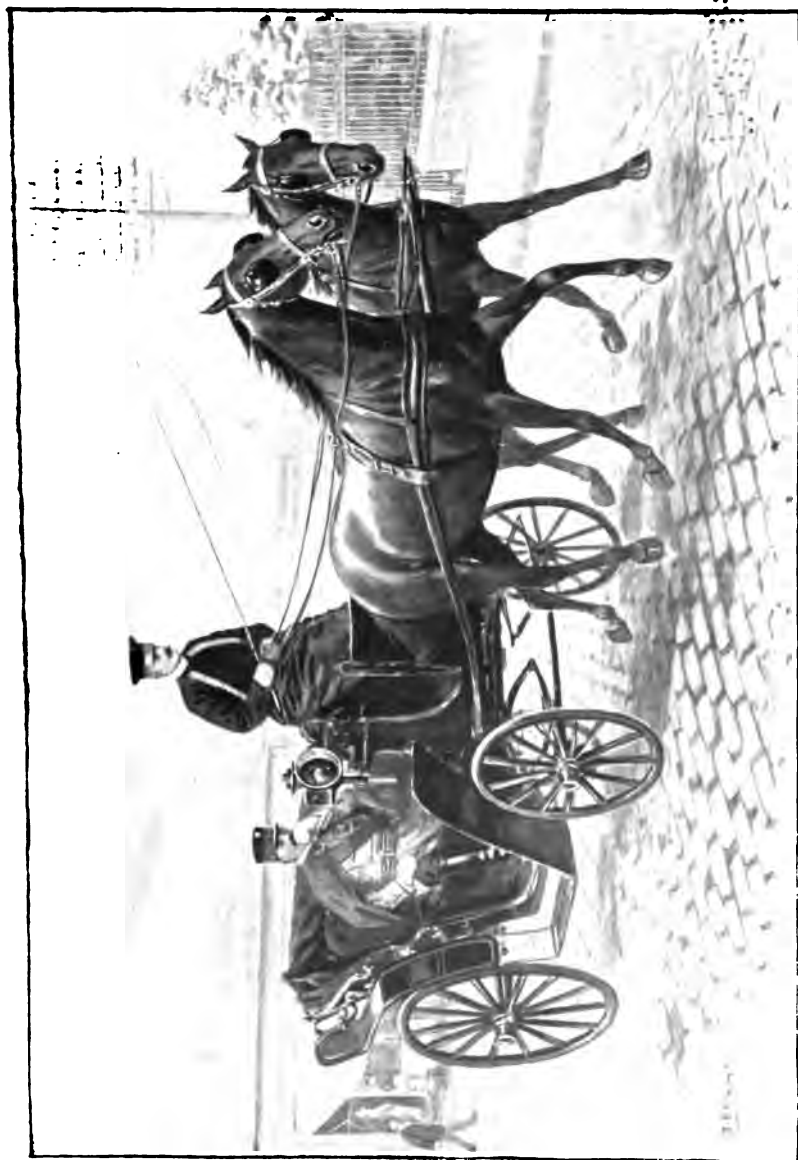
"Stand back!" was the reply, and, according to one account, he was instantly shot. But the truth seems to be that he led the conspirators up to the roof, and then, being assured that they desired nothing but the King's abdication, told them where they would find the royal couple. At any rate, he was killed, and the officers, led by Colonel Maschine, reached the locked door of the King's bedchamber. The King and Queen were within, and the murderers, shouting through the oaken door, and unable to gain admission, applied dynamite and burst the oaken panels into atoms. Colonel Naoumovitch is said to have been shot by an aide-de-camp whilst offering the form of abdication to the King. It was he who was officially described as "dying on the field of honour for his Fatherland."

Alexander and the Queen, clad only in night attire, had fled into an inner room, a small alcove not seven feet wide, surrounded by wardrobes. The time for parleying had passed; the prayers and entreaties of Alexander and Draga were disregarded.



THE ASSASSINATED KING AND QUEEN OF SERBIA.

1900



A FORMER EVERY-DAY SCENE IN BELGRADE.  
(King Alexander driving without escort.)

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Simultaneously the foremost officers, the youngest and least restrained, fired on the King, that none might know who had done the deed, and one savagely hacked at the Queen with his sabre. She shouted for help from the window, and, turning to face the assassins, was riddled with bullets and covered with sabre-wounds. On the next day marks of bullets were seen covering the ceiling, the coverlets, and the walls opposite the door. At seven minutes past two a.m. the clock had stopped ; it was at about that time that the dynamite bomb had shivered the door and made a way for the murderers.

The leading conspirators had determined that the work should be carried out effectively. The younger officers who distinguished themselves by their ferocity were animated chiefly by hatred of Draga and the belief that the King had brought dishonour on the country and on the Army. But the movement was at bottom a political one ; the leaders were anxious to secure a revolution in the Government, and to bring back the Karageorgevitch dynasty. They knew that the existing ministry stood uncompromisingly for the policy of the King ; that, associated as they were with his acts, they could not but oppose the projected revolution. The success of the conspirators and

their future safety could only be secured by the disappearance of the friends of the Obrenovitch. And so it was by no mere accident of savage impulse that the word went forth that the members of the reactionary Ministry and the Queen's family must be sought out and slain. Those who were more enthusiastic in the work of bloodshed were the rough instruments of the plotters. Draga's two brothers, Nikola and Nikodim Lunyevitza, were among the first to be slain. The Queen's two sisters, who were reported killed, as a matter of fact escaped. Parties of officers proceeded to the houses of the chief members of the Ministry. The Prime Minister, General Zinzar Markowitz, and the Minister of War, General Pawlowitch, were killed. M. Todorowitch, the Minister of the Interior, was severely wounded; and many senior officers who had refused to join the plot suffered the fate of the King's adherents.

Meantime Colonel Dimitreff Nikolics, the Commandant of the Danube Division, was outside the city with the Eighth Infantry Regiment. As soon as he heard what was happening in Belgrade, he brought up his soldiers in the hope of rescuing the King. He was met at the gates of the city by a strong force of revolutionary troops under





KING PETER I.



PRINCE PETER, HEIR TO THE SERBIAN THRONE.

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the command of Colonel Gagowitch. A fight ensued in which both the commanders were killed.

On the following day the rain descended in torrents. Troops were in position, guns were mounted, the city was in the hands of the revolutionaries. The King, the Ministry, all that represented the old Government, had disappeared; and excited crowds in the streets, pushing curiously about in the rain, learnt that they were to live under a new *régime*. The military leaders issued a decree proclaiming Peter Karageorgevitch King of Servia; and the Provisional Government which had been set up, with M. Avakumovitch as Premier and M. Kalyevitch as Minister for Foreign Affairs, issued a proclamation summoning the Skupshtina for the following Monday. The Constitution of 1901, illegally suspended by Alexander in the previous March, was declared to be once again operative.

Thus the revolution was effected, and with it passed away the last member of the Obrenovitch dynasty. The long vendetta between the rival houses had again and again convulsed the State, had weakened the Government, and tended to discredit Servian civilisation. Plot after plot had been carried through, and had brought to the surface the most savage

element in the life of the people. The uncertain tenure of the throne led to the exaltation of the military, and made the normal development of constitutional government impossible. The horrors committed at the revolution of June 10th have added one more danger to Servian life—the perpetual fear of the soldiery who can make and unmake a King. But, on the other hand, the sad death of Alexander and Draga, lamentable in itself, has at least removed the terrible inheritance of dynastic rivalry. The new holders of office can only make amends for the horror of the revolution by justifying the revolution itself—by asserting the claims of constitutional government against the private ambitions of the King on the one hand and the tyranny of the Army on the other.

On the Friday of June 12th the King and Queen were buried, quietly and secretly, in the family vault of the Obrenovitch, in the chapel of the old cemetery of St. Mark. In the dead of night two coffins were carried up the Palace staircase, and in them were placed the shrouded bodies of Alexander and Draga. The hearse was driven at once to the burial-ground, and the coffins were let down into the vault. There two solitary priests attended, and in a few minutes pronounced the last words over the departed.



THE CHURCH OF ST. MARK.  
(Where the murdered King and Queen are buried.)

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## SERVIAN FOLK-LORE





## THE GOLDEN-HAIRED TWINS.

*(Taken from Madame Mijatovich's "Folk-lore.")*

ONCE upon a time, a long, long while ago, there lived a young King, who wished very much to marry, but could not decide where he had better look for a wife.

One evening, as he was walking disguised through the streets of his capital, as it was his frequent custom to do, he stopped to listen near an open window where he heard three young girls chatting gaily together.

The girls were talking about a report which had been lately spread through the city, that the King intended soon to marry.

One of the girls exclaimed, "If the King would marry me I would give him a son who should be the greatest hero in the world."

The second girl said, "And if I were to be his

wife I would present him with two sons at once—twins with golden hair."

And the third girl declared that were the King to marry her, she would give him a daughter so beautiful that there should not be her equal in the whole wide world!

The young King listened to all this, and for some time thought over their words, and tried to make up his mind which of the three girls he should choose for his wife. At last he decided that he would marry the one who had said she would bring him twins with golden hair.

Having once settled this in his own mind, he ordered that all preparations for his marriage should be made forthwith, and shortly after, when all was ready, he married the second girl of the three.

Several months after his marriage, the young King, who was at war with one of the neighbouring princes, received tidings of the defeat of his army, and heard that his presence was immediately required in the camp. He accordingly left his capital and went to his army, leaving the young Queen in his palace to the care of his stepmother.

Now the King's stepmother hated her daughter-in-law very much indeed, so when the young Queen

was near her confinement, the old Queen told her that it was always customary in the royal family for the heirs to the throne to be born in a garret.

The young Queen (who knew nothing about the customs in royal families except what she had learnt from hearing and seeing since her marriage to the King) believed implicitly what her mother-in-law told her, although she thought it a great pity to leave her splendid apartments and go up into a miserable attic.

Now when the golden-haired twins were born, the old Queen contrived to steal them out of their cradle, and put in their place two ugly little dogs. She then caused the two beautiful golden-haired boys to be buried alive in an out-of-the-way spot in the palace gardens, and then sent word to the King that the young Queen had given him two little dogs instead of the heirs he was hoping for. The wicked stepmother said in her letter to the King that she herself was not surprised at this, though she was very sorry for his disappointment. As to herself, she had a long time suspected the young Queen of having too great a friendship for goblins and elves and all kinds of evil spirits.

When the King received this letter, he fell into

a frightful rage, because he had only married the young girl in order to have the golden-haired twins she had promised him as heirs to his throne.

So he sent word back to the old Queen that his wife should be put at once into the dampest dungeon in the castle, an order which the wicked old woman took good care to see carried out without delay. Accordingly the poor young Queen was thrown into a miserably dark dungeon under the palace and kept on bread and water.

Now there was only a very small hole in this prison—hardly large enough to let in light and air—yet the old Queen caused a great many people to pass by this hole, and whoever passed was ordered to spit at and abuse the unhappy young Queen, calling out to her, “Are you really the Queen? Are you the girl who cheated the King in order to be a Queen? Where are your golden-haired twins? You cheated the King and your friends, and now the witches have cheated you!”

But the young King, though terribly angry and mortified at his great disappointment, was, at the same time, too sad and troubled to be willing to return to his palace. So he remained away for fully nine years. When he at last consented to return,

the first thing he noticed in the palace gardens were two fine young trees, exactly the same size and the same shape.

These trees had both golden leaves and golden blossoms, and had grown up of themselves from the very spot where the stepmother of the King had buried the two golden-haired boys she had stolen from their cradle.

The King admired these two trees exceedingly, and was never weary of looking at them. This, however, did not at all please the old Queen, for she knew that the two young princes were buried just where the trees grew, and she always feared that by some means what she had done would come to the King's ears. She therefore pretended that she was very sick, and declared that she was sure that she should die unless her stepson, the King, ordered the two golden-leaved trees to be cut down, and a bed made for her out of their wood.

As the King was not willing to be the cause of her death, he ordered that her wishes should be attended to, notwithstanding he was exceedingly sorry to lose his favourite trees.

A bed was soon made from the two trees, and the seemingly sick old Queen was laid on it as she

desired. She was quite delighted that the golden-leaved trees had disappeared from the garden ; but when midnight came, she could not sleep a bit, for it seemed to her that she heard the boards of which her bed was made in conversation with each other.

At last it seemed to her that one board said, quite plainly, " How are you, my brother ? " And the other board answered, " Thank you, I am very well ; how are you ? " " Oh, I am all right," returned the first board ; " but I wonder how our poor mother is in her dark dungeon ? Perhaps she is hungry and thirsty."

The wicked old Queen could not sleep a minute all night, after hearing this conversation between the boards of her new bed ; so next morning she got up very early and went to see the King. She thanked him for attending to her wish, and said she already was much better, but she felt quite sure she would never recover thoroughly unless the boards of her new bed were cut up and thrown into the fire. The King was sorry to lose entirely even the boards made out of his two favourite trees ; nevertheless he would not refuse to use the means pointed out for his stepmother's perfect recovery.

So the new bed was cut to pieces and thrown into the fire. But whilst the boards were blazing

and crackling, two sparks from the fire fell into the courtyard, and in the next moment two beautiful lambs with golden fleeces and golden horns were seen gambolling about the yard.

The King admired them greatly, and made many inquiries who had sent them there, and to whom they belonged. He even sent the public crier many times through the city, calling on the owners of the golden-fleeced lambs to appear and claim them ; but no one came, so at length he thought he might fairly take them as his own property.

The King took very great care of these two beautiful lambs, and every day directed that they should be well fed and attended to ; this, however, did not at all please his stepmother. She could not endure even to look on the lambs with their golden fleeces and golden horns, for they always reminded her of the golden-haired twins ; so in a little while she pretended again to be dangerously sick, and declared she felt sure she should soon die unless the two lambs were killed and cooked for her.

The King was even fonder of his golden-fleeced lambs than he had been of the golden-leaved trees, but he could not long resist the tears and prayers of the old Queen, especially as she seemed

to be very ill. Accordingly, the lambs were killed, and a servant was ordered to carry their golden fleeces down to the river, and to wash the blood well out of them. But whilst the servant held them under the water, they slipped, in some way or another, out of his fingers and floated down the stream, which just at that place flowed very rapidly.

Now it happened that a hunter was passing near the river a little lower down, and, as he chanced to look in the water, he saw something strange in it. So he stepped into the stream, and soon fished out a small box, which he carried to his house, and there opened it. To his unspeakably great surprise, he found in the box two golden-haired boys. Now the hunter had no children of his own; he therefore adopted the twins he had fished out of the river, and brought them up just as if they had been his own sons. When the twins were grown up into handsome young men, one of them said to his foster-father, "Make us two suits of beggars' clothes, and let us go and wander a little about the world." The hunter, however, replied and said, "No, I will have a fine suit made for each of you, such as is fitting for two such noble-looking young men." But as the twins begged hard that he should not spend



his money uselessly in buying fine clothes, telling him that they wished to travel about as beggars, the hunter—who always liked to do as his handsome foster-sons wished—did as they desired, and ordered two suits of clothes, like those worn by beggars, to be prepared for them. The two sons then dressed themselves up as beggars, and as well as they could hid their beautiful golden locks, and then set out to see the world. They took with them a gusle and a cymbal, and maintained themselves by their singing and playing.

They had wandered about in this way some time, when one day they came to the King's palace. As the afternoon was already pretty far advanced, the young musicians begged to be allowed to pass the night in one of the outbuildings belonging to the court, as they were poor men, and quite strangers in the city. The old Queen, however, who happened to be just then in the courtyard, saw them, and hearing their request, said sharply that beggars could not be permitted to enter any part of the King's palace. The two travellers said they had hoped to pay for their night's lodging by their songs and music, as one of them played and sang to the gusle, and the other to the cymbal.

The old Queen, however, was not moved by this, but insisted on their going away at once. Happily for the two brothers, the King himself came out into the courtyard just as his stepmother angrily ordered them to go away, and at once directed his servants to find a place for the musicians to sleep in, and ordered them to provide the brothers with a good supper. After they had supped, the King commanded them to be brought before him, that he might judge of their skill as musicians, and that their singing might help him to pass the time more pleasantly.

Accordingly, after the two young men had taken the refreshment provided for them, the servants took them into the King's presence, and they began to sing this ballad :

“The pretty bird, the swallow, built her nest with care in the palace of the King. In the nest she reared up happily two of her little ones. A black, ugly-looking bird, however, came to the swallow's nest to mar her happiness and to kill her two little ones. And the ugly black bird succeeded in destroying the happiness of the poor little swallow ; the little ones, however, although yet weak and unfledged, were saved, and, when they were grown up and able

to fly, they came to look at the palace, where their mother, the pretty swallow, had built her nest."

This strange song the two minstrels sang so very sweetly that the King was quite charmed, and asked them the meaning of the words.

Whereupon the two meanly dressed young men took off their hats, so that the rich tresses of their golden hair fell down over their shoulders, and the light glanced so brightly upon it that the whole hall was illuminated by the shining. They then stepped forward together, and told the King all that had happened to them and to their mother, and convinced him that they were really his own sons.

The King was exceedingly angry when he heard all the cruel things his stepmother had done, and he gave orders that she should be burnt to death. He then went with the two golden-haired princes to the miserable dungeon wherein his unfortunate wife had been confined so many years, and brought her once more into her beautiful palace. There, looking on her golden-haired sons, and seeing how much the King, their father, loved them, she soon forgot all her long years of misery. As to the King, he felt that he could never do enough to make amends for all the misfortunes his Queen had lived through and all

the dangers to which his twin sons had been exposed. He felt that he had too easily believed the stories of the old Queen, because he would not trouble himself to inquire more particularly into the truth or falsehood of the strange things she had told him.

After all this mortification, and trouble, and misery, everything came right at last. So the King and his wife, with their golden-haired twins, lived together long and happily.

## KOSSOVO WAR POEM.

*(Translated by Her Excellency Madame Mijatovich.)*

### THE MAIDEN OF KOSSOVO AFTER THE BATTLE.

THE maiden of Kossovo rose early  
On the Sabbath morn, sooner than sunrise ;  
From her round arms she turn'd back the white sleeves,  
Turn'd them backward above the white elbows.  
On her shoulders a bag was with white bread,  
And in her hands were two golden vessels,—  
One vessel was fresh filled with cool water,  
The other to the brim was with red wine.

She went straight to the Plain of Kossovo,  
And sadly walked over the battle-field  
Where the glorious Czar Lazar had fallen.  
In the blood-pools she turned round the heroes,  
And if she found still one of them breathing  
She bathed him gently with clear cold water ;  
As sacrament she gave him the red wine,  
And fed him with small crumbs of the white bread.

In her wanderings she came, God-guided,  
To the brave young knight, Orlovich Pavle ;  
He who carried the Czar Lazar's standard.  
She found him yet alive, and still conscious,  
Though the right arm was slash'd from the shoulder  
And the left leg cut off from the knee-joint ;  
Yet alive, though his ribs all were broken,  
And his lungs were laid bare to the daylight !

She drew him gently forth from a blood-lake,  
She bathed him softly with clear, cold water ;  
Then she gave him to drink of the red wine,  
And fed him with small crumbs of the white bread.

When his heart-beatings grew somewhat stronger  
Said brave Orlovich faint to the maiden :

“ My sister,—fair maiden of Kossovo,  
Tell me what is the dire need which drives thee  
To move brave men in midst of their life-blood ?  
Whom seekest thou, so young, in this red field ?  
A brother ? Or the son of a brother ?—  
Or is it thine old father thou seekest ? ”

Then the maiden of Kossovo answered :

“ Dear brother ! dear thou art, though a stranger !  
I am seeking here none of my kindred ;  
Neither brother nor son of a brother ;—

I seek not even my own old father !  
To thee it must be known, O strange Voyvode,  
That all the Czar's men took communion  
In the beautiful church Samodreja ;  
The whole army took there communion.

“ Last of all came three valiant Voyvodes,  
Obilich Milosh, Kosanchich Ivan,  
And the third one, Milan of Toplitza.  
Three noble Voyvodes ! three of the noblest !  
They never had their equals in this world !  
When they walk'd, their swords rang on the pavement,  
On their heads they wore kalpaks of pure silk,  
Round their shoulders hung long chains of gold  
links,  
On their necks they wore kerchiefs of silk cloth ;  
They wore also gold rings on their fingers.

“ When the Obilich Milosh passed by me,  
He gave me for a present his gold chain ;  
When the Kosanchich Ivan passed by me,  
He gave me for a present his gold ring ;  
But when Milan of Toplitza passed by,  
He gave to me his fine glove of gold thread ;  
And he marked me thereby for his true love.  
These seek I to-day on the battle-field.”

Said again to her Orlovich Pavle :

“ My dear sister, maiden of Kossovo,

Dost thou not see there those broken war-spears ?

The last life-blood of heroes has flowed there !

Flowed high up as the stirrups of war-steeds !

It has reached to the belts of the footmen !

It is *there* thy three heroes have fallen !

But go back to thy white house, my sister !

Stain not thus thy white skirts and thy white sleeves.”

When the maiden of Kossovo heard him,

The great tears fell fast over her white cheeks.

She went back to the house of her father ;

Wildly weeping she went back, and wailing.

“ Woe to me ! What ill-luck hath befallen me !—

Oh, were I but to touch the green pine-tree,

The green tree at my sad touch would wither.”



## APPENDIX

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### I.

THE following interesting particulars relating to the Election of King Peter I. of Servia are reprinted by kind permission of the London *Daily Chronicle* :

THE NEW KING OF SERVIA.

DEPUTATION'S DEPARTURE DELAYED.

TE DEUM AT THE CATHEDRAL.

METROPOLITAN EULOGISES THE  
ARMY.

APATHY OF THE PEOPLE.

A solemn thanksgiving service was performed yesterday at Belgrade, and attended by the Ministers of State and Army officers. The Metropolitan of Belgrade delivered a discourse, in which he thanked the Army for what it had done and praised its behaviour.

Fears are expressed in the Servian capital that the Army, having executed the *coup d'état*, may continue to exercise arbitrary power. The feeling, however, is generally one of apathy.

The deputation from the National Assembly was reported to have left for Geneva. Its departure, however, has been delayed, chiefly owing to financial difficulties. It is therefore doubtful when King Peter will start for the Servian capital.

BELGRADE, *June 15th.*

The deputation which will go to Geneva to offer the Crown to Prince Peter Karageorgevitch is composed of twenty-four members, namely, four Senators and twenty Deputies. They will leave to-morrow with the officers who have been nominated for attendance on His Majesty.

In reply to the statement of the Provisional Government at the opening of the sitting of the National Assembly to-day, the latter adopted a resolution declaring that it greeted with enthusiasm the new order of things brought about by the occurrences of June 11th, and thereby gave expression to the complete solidarity of feeling of the whole Servian people and of the Servian Army. At the same time it recognised and approved the attitude of the Army, which was and remained the shield of the Fatherland, the defender of law and order, and a pledge for an upright and brilliant future. The Assembly further expressed its gratitude to the Provisional Government for the patriotism it had shown at such a fateful time, endorsed the measures adopted by it, and directed it to continue the conduct of affairs until the arrival of the new King.

*June 16th.*

Notwithstanding the issue of a notice by the municipal authorities yesterday calling upon the inhabitants to decorate their houses, the town can hardly be said to present a festive appearance. This is regarded as the best proof of the extraordinary lack of interest displayed by the majority of the people, whom the events that have shaken the State to its foundations have failed to arouse from apathy. The illumination of the city last night was not particularly brilliant. A military band marched through the streets playing, but heavy rain began to fall, and the streets were soon empty.

#### THE THANKSGIVING SERVICE.

The Chambers met at ten o'clock this morning, and adjourned for the purpose of going to the Cathedral, where a great thanksgiving service, with *Te Deum*, was performed.

The service was attended by the Ministers, the members of the Skupshtina, and a large congregation. The Metropolitan of Belgrade officiated. The service was characterised by the lavish and stately ceremonial of the Eastern Church. The Cathedral presented a picturesque scene. The aged Metropolitan, who was vested in a cope of purple and cloth of gold, and wore a jewelled mitre on his head, was surrounded by the Bishops and the Cathedral Chapter. Half of the congregation was composed of Army

officers in full uniform. The Ministers wore evening dress, with all their orders.

The Metropolitan read a brief address congratulating the nation upon the restoration of the Karageorgevitch dynasty, which, he said, had included so many brave and noble men. While deploring the necessity for the recent events, the Metropolitan thanked the Army for what it had done and praised its behaviour. As the Prelate spoke these words of eulogy the officers present audibly expressed their pleasure. The Metropolitan concluded by invoking the Divine blessing upon King Peter, and expressing the hope that under him Servia would enjoy peace and prosperity.

While the service was proceeding cannon boomed at intervals outside. The street in front of the Cathedral was lined with soldiers.

#### THE PREMIER'S TELEGRAM TO THE NEW KING.

The following is the text of the telegram by which M. Avakumovitch, the Servian Premier, informed King Peter of his election :

“ Peter Karageorgevitch, Geneva.—The national representatives of the people sitting together have just elected you King of Servia. While making you acquainted with this, the Government of Servia has the honour to tender you its heartiest congratulations, and to express their desire that our country may have a fortunate and glorious future in store

for it under the rule of a grandson of the famous Kara George I., the liberator of Servia."

The telegram of the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the Senate and Skupshtina was as follows :

" The national representatives of the people of the kingdom of Servia have unanimously and enthusiastically chosen you hereditary King of Servia. We, the undersigned, President and Vice-Presidents, have the honour to convey to you their most cordial and enthusiastic congratulations."

In reply to these messages M. Velimirovitch, President of the Skupshtina, has received a telegram from the new King, saying that Parliament has laid His Majesty under an everlasting obligation, and that he would ever be the first champion of the liberties of the nation, and the most faithful Constitutional protector of the rights of the National Assembly.

#### " THE ARMY'S HERO."

Guns were booming in honour of the new King, and the bells were ringing out merrily from the church towers this morning, when a solemn funeral procession passed down the main street of Belgrade, attended by all the elaborate ritual display of the Greek Church. A regiment of soldiers, headed by its band, followed. It was the funeral of a young lieutenant, to whom has been accorded the title of "The Army's Hero." On the night of the attack on the Konak, the commander of the division of

troops which was lying encamped in the environs of the city was surprised in the Palace by the conspirators. He managed to escape, and meeting a mounted orderly carrying dispatches to his own division, ordered him to dismount. Taking the horse himself, the officer rode towards his division in order to try and bring up some regiments to the King's help. Just before reaching the camp he was overtaken by the lieutenant, and a hand-to-hand fight ensued. The commander was killed, and the lieutenant mortally wounded. He was conveyed to a hospital, where he lingered until yesterday.

The mother of the dead officer, in tears, and supported on either side by a bareheaded officer, walked behind the coffin.

## THE OATH TO THE CONSTITUTION

### GRAND REVIEW OF TROOPS.

#### ROYAL PROCLAMATION.

*BELGRADE, Thursday night.*

So far, everything but the weather has gone well. Last night, while a torchlight procession was in progress and the multitude was thronging round the new Palace, a heavy shower of rain fell and thinned the crowd. The rain ceasing after a while, the King appeared on the balcony amid loud acclamations. Then several glee societies sang national songs, and the Mayor of Belgrade afterwards made a speech in



HIS EXCELLENCY M. CHEDOMILLE MIJATOVICH  
(Servian Minister at the Court of St. James.

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which he expressed joy at the return of the old Servian dynasty. The King replied in a long speech, expressing his desire for the prosperous development of the city of Belgrade.

This morning at nine o'clock the King took the oath to the Constitution. At eight o'clock the Senators and Deputies had assembled in the Skupshtina's small, old house, built in the Turkish style, which was draped with the national colours. Many were in evening dress or military uniforms, but there were some who appeared in parti-coloured peasant costumes. The galleries and the seats of the absent Diplomatic Body were filled with foreign journalists. The Metropolitan, assisted by numerous clergy, celebrated mass. A throne had been erected in the place usually occupied by the President's desk, in front of which was a small gilt table.

When the music outside announced the approach of the King the President of the Senate (M. Velimirovitch), with the Cabinet Ministers, passed quickly to the entrance in order to receive His Majesty. Enthusiastic shouts from the populace greeted King Peter on entering the building, and the popular ovation was followed by the prolonged cheers of the assembly as the King walked to the throne. There he stood for several seconds silent; then in a clear voice His Majesty said: "God help you, brethren! God help you!" "Long life to the King!" resounded through the hall in reply.

During the ceremony all stood. The King, who

wore a General's uniform and the Russian Order of St. Andrew, stood in a graceful attitude, looking round in a friendly way upon the assembly ; but he was visibly suffering in health. His appearance and unassuming demeanour made the best impression ; and the remark was frequently heard : " He will be a good, popular ruler, such as the country wants."

The Mass concluded, the King, taking off his gloves, and placing his right hand on the Bible, read the form of oath in a loud voice, and with due emphasis. The King's oath was in the following terms :

" I, Peter Karageorgevitch, on ascending the Throne of the Kingdom of Servia, and assuming the Royal Power, swear by Almighty God and by all that is holiest and dearest to me upon this earth that I will protect the independence of Servia and the unity of its Government, that I will maintain inviolate the Constitution of the country, that I will govern in conformity with the Constitution and with the laws, and that in all my undertakings and dealings I will keep the welfare of my people before my eyes. Taking this my oath solemnly before God and the people, I call to witness the Lord God, to whom I shall give account at His judgment seat. So help me, God. Amen."

His Majesty was greeted with loud applause at the conclusion of the recital.

After this ceremony, which lasted about a quarter of an hour, His Majesty left for Banjiza Common,

where he held a grand military review. The King appeared on a white stallion. Next him rode General Popovitch and the War Minister (General Atanazkovitch), and a long cavalcade of officers followed the King as he rode along the front of the troops. At half-past ten the King came back to the saluting post, where he conversed with the Russian and Austrian Military Attachés. In the march past the first of the troops presented by Lieutenant-Colonel Mishitch—who, by the way, fired the first shot at King Alexander—was the Sixth Infantry Regiment, which took a prominent part in the conspiracy.

### PROCLAMATION BY KING PETER.

“TO THE PAST I CONSIGN THE PAST.”

*BELGRADE, June 25th.*

King Peter to-day issued the following Proclamation :

“To my Beloved People,—This occasion, the first on which I address the Servian people as King, is full of significance for myself as well as for the country. The national representatives, in agreement with the feelings and wishes of the whole people, have unanimously elected me King of Servia. Having accepted this choice, I have to-day, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, taken the oath before the national representatives of the people as Servia's Constitutional King, and I now announce

to my beloved people that from to-day I enter upon my royal rights and duties. By God's providence, and with the people's will, which a century ago chose my grandfather Kara George to lead the Servian people in the sacred struggle for independence, I have also ascended the throne of the Kingdom of Servia on which my father, Prince Alexander, ruled for sixteen years as the chosen of the people. Accustomed at all times to speak and act sincerely and openly, and resolved to devote all my care to the happiness and welfare of the people, I consider it to be my first duty on this solemn and momentous occasion to express my deep conviction that the ruler should be the bearer of the freedom and progress of his people. I will be a true Constitutional King of Servia. For me all Constitutional guarantees of freedom and popular rights, which are the basis of all regular and prosperous development as well as of all national progress and Constitutional life, are sacred trusts which I will always carefully respect and guard. I expect every one to do the same. Imbued with these sentiments, to the past I consign the past, and I leave it to history to judge each one according to his deeds. Remaining true to the traditions of Servia's forefathers, I will allow myself to be guided in foreign politics by the time-honoured endeavours of the Servian people, and will at the same time maintain friendly relations, especially with neighbouring Powers, which the necessity for European concord demands. My gallant Army, of



HER EXCELLENCY MADAME ELODIE L. MIJATOVICH.

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whose services and devotion to the Fatherland I here express my royal recognition, I will raise to a height worthy of the hope of the Servian people. With these thoughts and sentiments, at the same time I fully realise the difficulty and extent of my duties as Ruler. I am convinced, however, of the loyal support of the people, and I trust that by the help of God and my people I shall bring welfare, progress, and prosperity to Servia."—*Reuter*.

#### PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT TO REMAIN.

This afternoon King Peter confirmed the appointment of the Cabinet as at present constituted.—*Reuter*.

### HIS MAJESTY'S ENTRY INTO BELGRADE.

#### SERVICE AT THE CATHEDRAL.

#### POPULAR ENTHUSIASM.

*BELGRADE, Wednesday night.*

At ten o'clock this morning King Peter made his entry into Belgrade. It was pouring all yesterday and throughout the night, the weather being cold and gloomy. This morning the rain stopped, and crowds of peasants in gay costumes from the country filled the streets, those leading to the station being thronged. The streets were gaily decorated, and lined all along with soldiers. All the shops were closed. Cabinet Ministers, Generals, Senators, and

Deputies assembled to greet the King, but of the diplomatic body only the Russian and Austrian Ministers put in an appearance.

On the stroke of ten o'clock was heard the whistle of an engine, causing a thrill to pass through the assembled multitudes. The King's train had crossed the Save Bridge; the King had entered Servian territory. The firing of cannon announced the event so important to Servia. Three minutes later the special train steamed into the station while a band played a lively march. The National Anthem was not played, for obvious reasons.

Loud and prolonged cheers greeted the King on his emerging from the railway carriage. He was wearing the uniform of a Servian General, with the ribbon of the Russian Order of Saint Andrew recently bestowed on him by the Czar. King Peter is a man of imposing appearance, but he was very pale, his face clearly showing great excitement and the fatigue of a long journey. His Majesty went straight up to the Prime Minister, M. Avakumovitch, who addressed the King, pointing out the great importance of to-day's event, and reminding him that the Karageorgevitch family have deserved well of their country. He expressed the hope that now a new era would dawn for Servia, an era of tranquillity, peace, order, and law. He hoped that with King Peter happiness would enter Servia, and concluded with calling for cheers for King Peter Karageorgevitch the First, grandson of the Great Karageorgevitch.



Enthusiastic "zivios" followed the Prime Minister's speech.

King Peter replied in a low voice trembling with emotion. He thanked them for the splendid reception they had given him, and for the unanimity with which he had been elected. The King remarked that in a distant land he had keenly felt for the fate of his country, and that he should do all in his power to make Servia happy. His Majesty, in conclusion, called for cheers for the Servian nation and the Servian land. The royal speech evoked loud and enthusiastic applause.

The Prime Minister then introduced the Cabinet Ministers to His Majesty, after which the King, accompanied by the Premier, passed down the line of the guard of honour, saluting it. Next came the presentation of Generals to the King, after which M. Pavlovitch, a member of the Communal Council, addressed the King, greeting him in the name of the citizens of Belgrade, and according to Slav custom offering His Majesty bread and salt. The King briefly returned thanks.

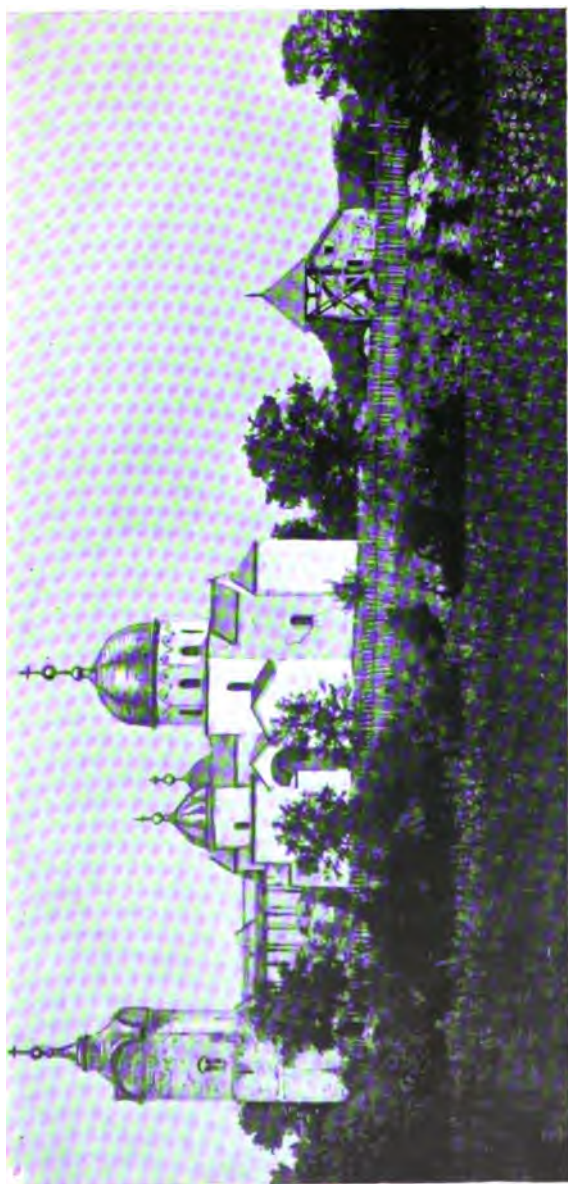
Before entering the waiting-room M. Avakumovitch presented to His Majesty M. Tcharikoff, the Russian Minister. The latter afterwards presented Herr Dumba, the Austrian Minister. That formality signified that Austria-Hungary has no relations with the present Cabinet. All the other dignitaries were then presented to the King by the Prime Minister. The entire ceremony at the station lasted only a

quarter of an hour. The King then entered a State carriage drawn by four horses, having been presented with a magnificent bouquet by a deputation of twenty ladies. Accompanied by the Ministers and amidst the applause of the people, His Majesty started for the Cathedral.

A detachment of guards surrounded the King, who was followed by the members of his suite. The crowds, as they caught sight of King Peter, hailed him with long-continued and jubilant shouts along the entire route, and flowers were continually thrown into the carriage. His Majesty bowed to the people in all directions, seeming to have won all hearts at one stroke. The King's unaffected and distinguished demeanour, his steadfast and friendly glance, electrified the multitude, and from all sides was heard the cry of the people, "That's a King; look at him. How different from the shy, clumsy Alexander!" The enthusiastic acclamations of the assembled multitudes seemed to rouse the King, who was at first pale and diffident. By degrees he gained confidence, and his face was radiant with joy while again and again he bowed his acknowledgments, at the same time carrying on a lively conversation with the Premier, who was seated on his left.

#### IN THE CATHEDRAL.

The ceremony in the Cathedral, which was attended by Civil servants from the Ministries and



THE OLD ABBEY OF ZITCHA.

(In which during the Middle Ages Servian kings were crowned, and in which King Alexander was anointed in 1385.)

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other public offices, as well as the higher dignitaries of State, was most impressive. The Metropolitan entered from the doors of the high altar, preceded by a solemn procession of priests and incense-bearers. At the termination of the Mass, which was attended by all the splendour of the Eastern Church, the aged Metropolitan, wearing his robes of State, addressed the King in heartfelt words, saying all that happens on earth happens according to God's will.

"The entire nation" (he said) "has sanctioned your election, and so we pray God to bless your Majesty, to save you, to bless your reign for the welfare of the country." Then the King advanced towards the altar, knelt down, offered up a fervent prayer, and kissed the cross held out to him by the Metropolitan.

Prolonged and enthusiastic acclamations again greeted the King on leaving the Cathedral. Re-entering his carriage, His Majesty took his way to the new Palace, preceded by a squadron of cavalry, and followed by his suite and numerous officers on horseback. After them came some score of carriages, containing the Servian dignitaries.

On arrival at the new Palace, which is close to the old Konak, the scene of the Obrenovitch tragedy, the King showed himself to his people on the balcony, being visibly moved. He wanted to address the multitude, but the thundering cheers of the crowd drowned his voice.

In the Palace the King was addressed by

M. Velimirovitch, the President of the Senate, in the presence of the members of the Senate and of the Skupshtina. This was the last appearance of the Senate, which disappears under the new Constitution.

Despite the dull and cold weather which continued, crowds of people thronged the streets, particularly before the new Palace, to catch a glimpse of the new King, bands of music playing rousing tunes marched through the town, and divers popular amusements were arranged in different parts of the capital. Most of the people are wearing medallions with the King's portrait. Everywhere is manifested a feeling of relief that at last the King has arrived and the crisis is over.

After the reception of the King by the Senate and the Skupshtina His Majesty withdrew to his apartments. For the present the King will not enter the old Konak, the scene of the disgraceful crimes. Its blinds were drawn down to-day, as the work of removing the traces of murder and the restoration of things destroyed is still going on. The Ministers and some twenty Generals and dignitaries dined with the King in the evening, and preparations are being made for a grand torchlight procession.

All the late King Alexander's servants retain their offices in the household, and are now waiting upon King Peter. The fact is commented upon that the crowds to-day heartily cheered all the military officers who rode by, and frequently shouted, "Long live the Army!"

Among those presented to His Majesty was Colonel Maschine in full uniform.

BELGRADE, *Friday night.*

Yesterday and to-day, just a fortnight after the horrible slaughter, the people of Belgrade have given themselves up to grand popular *fêtes*, rejoicing at the new state of things. The King has taken an active part in these festivities, fraternising with the people.

On arriving at the park he ordered away the gendarmes who had been posted by his pavilion, and asked the people to come nearer. He shook hands with soldiers and peasants, kissed the children, and constantly encouraged them to dance. These royal acts were greeted with continued cheers, whereupon the King called out, "Cheer less and dance more." A man came and asked the King to open the national "Kolo" dance. His Majesty replied, "I cannot dance." The peasant insisted, and it took some time for the King to persuade the peasant that it could not be done. Suddenly King Peter beheld in the crowd a pretty peasant-girl. He called to her and asked her to open the dance, which she readily did. Gypsy music was played, and the people danced round the royal pavilion. The King, who for some time cheerfully watched the dancing, sat down, lighted a cigarette, and conversed with M. Kalyevitch, the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The first order given by the King concerns the

foreign Press. Henceforth no foreign papers must be seized or blacked. "Servia," said the King, "shall henceforth know the opinion of foreign nations." When the King retired to his apartment last night the *chef de cuisine* inquired which were His Majesty's favourite dishes. The King replied, "I have no time for menus, and I do not wish ever to be asked about those matters." The King has re-engaged all King Alexander's Court servants.

To-day was the King's first reception. Only the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Ministers appeared, the former with the whole legation, and the latter with his *attaché*. A band of music played in the garden behind the Palace. The King's conversation with the diplomats was of short duration. Then came the high clergy, deputies, senators, and officers. To everyone the King made a few pleasant remarks.

A great effect has been produced by the Emperor William's telegram, this being the first reply to King Peter's notification. In his reply the Kaiser expressed a desire that Servia should under King Peter be conducted in the way of peace and progress, and congratulated the King on his ascension of the throne.

The Austro-Hungarian Minister resumed official relations with the Servian Government to-day. It is confidently expected here that in a day or two all other nations, perhaps with the exception of Great Britain, will resume relations with the Government.



## CHEERS AT THE THEATRE.

*BELGRADE, June 25th.*

A gala performance was held at the theatre here to-night. The performance took the form of an allegorical representation of the freeing of Servia by Kara George I. The King, on entering the house, received the most enthusiastic demonstration since his arrival in Belgrade.

His Majesty, who did not speak, sat between the Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Before the end of the performance the King sent away his military escort and returned to the Palace unguarded.

*June 26th.*

The King's action in dispensing with his military escort on his return from the theatre last night created a highly favourable impression. The gala performance was attended by a distinguished company, including the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Ministers, with their ladies.

## AMNESTY TO PRISONERS.

The newspapers here state that the King has granted an amnesty to all persons condemned for Press or political offences, and has reduced the sentences of those imprisoned for common offences.

## CIRCULAR TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

The Servian Foreign Minister has sent a Circular Note to the Servian representatives abroad explaining the reasons which have led King Peter to form his first Cabinet from the same officials who composed the Provisional Government. The King thought that, in the present circumstances, he could not do better than entrust the Government to the men in whom the present Parliament had only a few days previously expressed its full confidence. One of the first tasks of the new Government would be to order new elections, and on the meeting of the new National Assembly the King would be able to form his second Cabinet from men who represented the majority.

## PROCLAMATION TO "MY DEAR, HEROIC ARMY."

6 p.m.

The *Official Journal* publishes the following Army order issued by the King :

"My dear Army,—On my setting foot on the soil of the dear Fatherland, my cradle and the cradle of my ancestors, my heart gives greeting first to you, the hope of the Servian people, my dear, heroic Army. Ascending the throne of my glorious ancestors, I also take over the supreme command of the whole Servian Army, which, under the leadership of my immortal grandfather, by its virtues and military successes astounded the world, and subsequently,

in later wars for the liberation of the Servian people, afforded so many proofs of its military merits that I feel happy that the chief command has been entrusted to me by the Servian people.

“Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers, and Men,—  
At the solemn moment of taking over the supreme command, I greet you with the words, God be with you, you falcons of the Servian people!

“Officers! I am happy, in taking over the supreme command, to see you all united around my throne, imbued with fidelity and loyalty to me and to the ideals of our Fatherland, and I will endeavour to maintain *esprit de corps* by judging and estimating you, each and all, solely according to your military services and merits. You are all equally dear to me, and I merely ask that you will devote yourself heartily to the calling which you have chosen, and will assist me to guide you to the path of honour and glory. I therefore cry, Long live the hope of the Servian people, the Army!”—*Reuter*.

## II.

### A CLAIRVOYANT VISION OF THE ASSASSINATIONS AT BELGRADE.

THE assassination of the King and the Queen at Belgrade, which occurred in the early hours of the morning of June 11th, was foreseen in London on the night of March 20th, 1903. The bloody tragedy in the Palace was seen clairvoyantly three months before it took place, and described in the hearing of at least a dozen credible witnesses. The fact was reported next day to the Servian Minister, who, on March 24th, made inquiry as to the accuracy of the information, and entered in his journal a brief statement of the vision described by the clairvoyant as he took it down from the lips of the principal witness. Four days later he wrote a private letter to King Alexander, with an urgent warning against assassination, specially emphasising the danger of an attack being made upon him within the walls of his own Palace.

Of that warning no heed was taken, and on June 11th the King and the Queen were murdered almost exactly as the clairvoyant had seen the tragedy performed. There were some slight discrepancies. There is some difference of recollection among those

present as to whether the Queen escaped or whether she shared the fate of her husband, but with that exception the prediction was literally fulfilled.

Compared with this remarkable instance of clair-voyant vision of things to come, the famous warning of the soothsayer who warned Julius Cæsar to beware of the Ides of March sinks into insignificance. The fact has gone the round of the world. It is therefore well to place the details on permanent record.

In the newspaper reports many inaccuracies occur, but the following narrative may be relied upon as authentic.

#### I.—THE FIRST QUESTION OF FACT.

In drawing up the statement of facts connected with this extraordinary case, I hesitated a good deal as to the best and simplest way of telling the story. At first I thought of giving the statements, one after another, of the fifteen persons who were present at the meeting where the prediction was first delivered. That, no doubt, would have had its advantages, and its adoption, if the *Review* were the report of the proceedings of a scientific society, would have been a matter of course. But on mature reflection it seemed to me that as in a trial for murder the first thing to be done is to establish the fact that someone has been murdered, after which evidence is taken for the purpose of ascertaining by whom the murder has been committed, so in an investigation as to a case of

alleged clairvoyant prevision the first thing to be done is to produce evidence which will establish beyond all controversy the fact that such a prediction was actually uttered, was communicated to an official authority, and by him first entered in his archives, and afterwards reported to the person whom it most concerned. After this preliminary fact has been established, we can then go on to collect the evidence of witnesses who are in a position to testify at first hand as to how and by whom the prediction in question first came to be made. Hence the first and vital question is not who was the clairvoyant or who were present when her description was given. The essential points are whether in the month of March such a prediction was made, whether it was conveyed to the representative of the murdered monarch, and whether a warning based upon that prediction was sent to the King. On these points there is fortunately no flaw in the evidence. It is clear and precise, and it rests upon the first-hand testimony of an unimpeachable witness, who carefully committed to writing at the time the substance of the information which he received.

#### THE FIRST WITNESS.

M. Chedomille Mijatovich, the Servian Minister accredited to the Court of St. James by the late King of Servia, is no ordinary person. He is far and away the best known, the most distinguished,

and the most respected diplomatist the Balkan Peninsula has yet produced. Nor is he merely a diplomatist. He is a statesman, a scholar, a historian, and a man of profound religious convictions. It was he who, twenty years ago, helped to found the *Christian Messenger*, which is still published at Belgrade for the purpose of infusing evangelical fervour into the Greek Orthodox Church. He translated Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" into Servian, as well as Dr. Brown's Commentaries to the Gospels, and it was thanks to his facile and industrious pen that the population of the Balkans became acquainted with the best sermons of Canon Liddon and of Mr. Spurgeon. He first became known as an able and courageous Minister of State in the dark days of 1876, and from that time to the present day he has constantly been summoned to the counsels of the King at times of crisis. He was a member of the late Servian Senate. He has represented Servia diplomatically at Constantinople, as well as in London. He was the Servian Plenipotentiary at the Conference at The Hague, and no delegate from any of the minor, or indeed of the major, States contributed more to secure the success of the Conference outside the walls of the House in the Wood. He is also the author of many historical works displaying painstaking research and deep erudition. His wife, an English lady, is also a writer, and her books have done much to make Servia and the Servians known to the Western

world. M. Mijatovich commanded the confidence of both King Milan and King Alexander. He is well known in most of the capitals of Europe, and wherever he is known he is universally popular.

#### THE SERVIAN MINISTER'S STATEMENT.

It would be difficult to have a witness of greater repute than M. Mijatovich as to the fact which first of all has to be established, viz. that a warning was sent to the late King, based on information received from a clairvoyant, whose statement is as follows :

“I, Chedomille Mijatovich, now residing at 51, Palace Gardens Terrace, Kensington, make this statement, as being, to the best of my knowledge and belief, a full and exact narrative of what I know of this remarkable affair.

“I have long taken a deep interest in psychical research, and this brought me five or six years ago to make the acquaintance of Mr. Stead, the editor of *Borderland* and the *Review of Reviews*. Knowing my interest in these subjects, Mr. Stead invited me to be present at a meeting in his office in Mowbray House, Norfolk Street, London, on Friday afternoon, March 20th, 1903, when a psychometrist of some repute was to give a demonstration of her capacity to receive impressions from articles held in her hand, of the origin and nature of which she had no information. The following is an extract from Mr. Stead's letter :



“‘On Friday next at our At Home we shall have a very good clairvoyant at Mowbray House. She has undertaken to do from twelve to twenty tests. That is to say, ten or twenty articles will be submitted to her at random, of all of which she will know nothing, and she will state what she sees in connection with each. I hope that you will be able to come and to bring with you one or two articles, the clairvoyant reading of which might be of interest or value. If, for instance, you could bring a shred of that historical garment, of which Mr. L—— spoke, which is in your possession, and which he said he would place at my disposal for the purpose of this investigation, or if you had any other article which was penetrated with the atmosphere either of, say, King Milan or Queen Draga, it would be very interesting to see if we could get anything out of them.’

“I accepted the invitation. The rooms at Mowbray House were crowded. The lady, whose name I was told was Mrs. Burchell, complained that the conditions were bad, and the experiment was a failure.

“Among the articles brought to Mowbray House for submission to the psychometrist was the signature of King Alexander. The name was signed in Cyrillic characters on a sheet of paper which was enclosed in an envelope. It was prepared in order to see whether the psychometrist from handling the envelope could ‘sense’ and describe the person

of the King. That was the sole object of the experiment. Nothing more was claimed or expected.

"Owing to the number of articles offered for experiment, and owing also to the abrupt termination of the trials, the envelope with the King's signature was not produced at Mowbray House. It was not submitted to Mrs. Burchell as a test. While I was present nothing was said as to its existence.

"When I quitted Mowbray House the King's signature was left with one of the company, Mr. L——, who remained behind to dine with Mr. Stead, Mrs. Burchell, and some others. I was unable to stay to dinner, as I had to go to the Court at Buckingham Palace that evening. I returned home, feeling that the experiment had been a complete failure.

"On the following morning, Saturday, March 21st, I was surprised to receive a visit at my house, 51, Palace Gardens Terrace, from Mr. L——. He said that after the dinner in the restaurant a *séance* had been held, at which he had submitted the envelope containing the King's signature to Mrs. Burchell. He told me that on receiving the envelope she had been thrown into a state of violent agitation. She had then described the assassination of the King and the attempted assassination of the Queen in the interior of his palace. He gave me many details which had convinced him that Mrs. Burchell had actually seen in clairvoyant vision the assassination of my Sovereign in the interior of his palace."

## THE ENTRY IN HIS JOURNAL.

“ On the following Tuesday, March 24th, I made it my business to call at Mowbray House in order to ascertain from Mr. Stead his version of what had happened. I briefly told him what Mr. L—— had told me, and asked him whether such a scene had actually been described. On returning home I made an entry in my journal, of which the following is an exact copy :

“ ‘ London (51, Palace Gardens Terrace),

“ ‘ March 24th, 1903.

“ ‘ This afternoon I went to Mowbray House, Norfolk Street, Victoria Embankment, to see Mr. William Stead (the Editor of *Review of Reviews*), and to ask him what it was that his clairvoyant of last Friday (March 20th) said of King Alexander. Mr. Stead told me.

“ ‘ Mr. L—— gave her into her hand a small paper. She held it for a moment, and then said : “ This is the signature of a young man in a very high position ! Yes, it is the signature of a king.” (She then proceeded to describe King Alexander’s appearance.) “ He has his Queen at his side ; she is a brunette, older than he. But, O God ! what do I see ! Oh, it is too terrible.” . . . And then, Mr. Stead said, she suddenly fell on her knees, clasped excitedly her hands, and with closed eyes and uplifted head she

prayed to the Great Spirit to—save them, if possible! “I see them both, the King and Queen; and there is a dark man with the dagger in hand. He tries to kill them; it is a terrible struggle; the Queen escapes unhurt, but the King is assassinated.” Stead said Mrs. Bourcher (*sic*), the clairvoyant, was terribly agitated. She described what she saw in the presence of several ladies and gentlemen, who were deeply impressed with it.”

#### THE WARNING TO THE KING.

“Four days later, on March 28th, I wrote a letter to King Alexander, in the course of which I felt it my duty to warn him as to impending danger. I did not keep a copy of my letter, but I perfectly well remember the passage in question. I hold the Post Office receipt for the registered letter addressed ‘À sa Majesté le Roi, Belgrade, Serbie.’ I wrote as follows :

“ ‘I know your Majesty will laugh as you usually laughed when I spoke to you about clairvoyance, so I am not going to give you all particulars about the latest experience which I have had, but I implore your Majesty to take all possible measures for your personal safety, not only when you drive about or when you go to the church or the theatre or to the park, but when in your palace especially, because I have reason to believe that an attempt will be made to assassinate you in your own palace.’

"My wife read my letter before it was sent off, and she confirms the accuracy of this account of its contents. I may say that I had often talked to King Alexander about psychic experiences, but he always mocked, and would not take them seriously. I never before sent him any warning as to an attempt on his person.

"I was myself so deeply impressed by the importance of the clairvoyant's vision that I half expected that the King, despite his scepticism, would summon me to Belgrade in order to hear more details. This expectation was not realised. He neither sent for me nor took any notice of my warning.

"When the news arrived of his tragic end, my thoughts instantly recurred to the warning which I had sent him, and I stated to several representatives of the Press the fact, which was duly published in the London evening newspapers of June 11th."

The foregoing narrative is sufficient, if it stood alone, to establish the fact that the prediction was made, and of the warning sent to Belgrade. It is quite possible that M. Mijatovich's letter will be found among the papers of the late King. That he sent it is attested not only by his own word and by that of Madame Mijatovich, who has confirmed the statement of her husband, but also by the Notting Hill Post-Office's certificate of a registered letter sent to the King of Servia.

## II.—WHO FIRST HEARD THE PREDICTION ?

Having thus established the essential fact that the prediction was communicated to the Servian Minister in March, we now come to the secondary question as to how, when, and where the clairvoyant vision took place. As I was the host on the occasion, I append a statement under my own name :

### STATEMENT OF MR. STEAD.

I invited a numerous company, including M. Mijatovich, Earl Grey, Mr. L——, Mr. Gilbert Elliot, etc., to come on Friday, March 20th, 1903, to witness an experiment in psychometry by Mrs. Burchell at our weekly At Home in Mowbray House.

The At Home at Mowbray House began at four in the afternoon. The psychometric experiment began an hour later, in the presence of seventy or eighty persons. In about half an hour it was seen that the conditions were adverse, and Mrs. Burchell went upstairs to give private sittings, where she succeeded much better, while the company remained below and discussed psychometry. This went on till after seven. As the company was departing Miss C—— (now Mrs. L——) tried on a beautiful Court dress brought by Mr. L——, and Mr. Metcalf, Mrs. Brenchley, and Mrs. Manks described the impressions which they received from the dress. About eight we went up to the restaurant of Gatti and Rodesano,

Strand. The following is a list of the company present, with their addresses :

(I sat at the head of the table, with Mrs. Burchell on my right and Mrs. Manks on my left. Mr. L—— sat at the opposite end of the table, next to my private secretary, on the other side to Mrs. Burchell.)

THE NAMES OF THE WITNESSES.

W. T. Stead, Cambridge House, Wimbledon,  
with his sister and daughter.

Gilbert Elliot, Highfield, Mottingham, Kent.

Andrew Glendinning, 11, St. Philip's Road,  
Dalston.

C. E. Money, Petersfield.

Mr. and Mrs. L——.

Mr. H. Blackwell, Queen's Road, Finsbury Park.

Mr. D. Macdonald, Eupatoria, St. Stephen's  
Road, Hounslow.

Mr. Metcalf, Queen's Road, Finsbury Park.

Mrs. Burchell, Giraltington Road, Bradford.

Mrs. Brenchley, 111, St. Thomas's Road, Fins-  
bury Park.

Mrs. Manks, 166, Marylebone Road, London.

Mrs. Wilson, St. Clement's Mansions.

My Private Secretary, Mowbray House.

The names of Mr. and Mrs. L—— and their addresses are in my possession, but they prefer that at present they should only be mentioned by their initials.

All those persons, with the exception of Mr.

Money, remained until after Mrs. Burchell's prediction, which was uttered after ten o'clock. At that time we had been together about six hours, and were rather tired and disappointed, and were certainly not expecting anything unusual. The sitting after dinner was in no sense a test sitting, like that which had been prepared in the afternoon. No preparations were made for taking notes, and, so far as I know, none were taken.

#### WHAT TOOK PLACE AT DINNER.

During dinner the conversation was general. We talked at my end of the table about many things, and as Mr. L—— was present, I talked about him and about Servia. But so far as I can remember the name of the King was never mentioned, nor was anything said that directly or indirectly could suggest the idea of his assassination. No such thought was present to my mind. As for Mrs. Burchell, she is a plain North Country woman, who dispenses medicine of her own making, who has had a family of ten children, and who did not seem to me a person who had either interest in or knowledge of the Balkan Peninsula. She has since, in the *St. James's Gazette*, written, "As to my knowledge of Servian affairs, I was then completely ignorant, and did not know either the King's name or the Queen's antecedents or name, or anything in connection with them in any way." She was tired and silent at dinner, depressed by the consciousness of the afternoon





QUEEN NATALIE IN SERVIAN DRESS.

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failure at psychometry, and I addressed most of my remarks to Mrs. Manks.

THE *SÉANCE* AFTER DINNER.

After the dinner there were several descriptions given by Mrs. Burchell of the impressions which she received in connection with various members of the company. It was in her description of the impressions she received from Mr. L—— that he nodded from time to time; an indiscretion which led to a protest from my private secretary. This, however, had nothing to do with the vision of the assassination. When the prediction was made Mrs. Burchell had her eyes closed. I had no idea, while she was speaking, whether she was describing a tragedy that had taken place long ago or was predicting what would happen. I did not know what was in the envelope which she placed to her brow until after all was over. When the paper was taken out of the envelope, not being able to decipher the Cyrillic characters, I asked Mr. L—— whose name it was. He replied, "The King." He then entered into conversation with Mrs. Burchell, but I did not hear what she said.

The other two clairvoyants present, Mrs. Brenchley and Mrs. Manks, declared that they saw the same scene when it was in progress, and Mrs. Brenchley was only one degree less excited than Mrs. Burchell. It was she who added the detail about the Russian uniforms.

Immediately after this vision Mrs. Burchell left with other of my guests. A few remained for another hour, when other delineations and predictions were made, of which, however, it is unnecessary to speak here.

As I was on my way home in the midnight train to Wimbledon I met a journalistic friend of mine, Mr. Arthur Hawkes, then London editor of the *Manchester Dispatch*, and told him what had taken place. He has given me the following brief note of the conversation as it was graven on the tablets of his memory :

“ I read of the assassination of the King and Queen of Servia on arriving at Madeira from Cape-town on June 22nd, and in the *Daily Telegraph* saw an account of a prediction of the crime at a dinner given by Mr. Stead on March 20th. I immediately told Mr. Reed, of Johannesburg, who had called my attention to the paragraph, that I was present at the meeting at Mowbray House on the afternoon of that day, and missed being at the dinner through having left Mowbray House before the afternoon meeting was concluded. But going home late that evening I accidentally met Mr. Stead at Waterloo, and rode with him as far as Wimbledon. On the way he told me about the dinner and *séance*, saying that a lady had predicted the assassination of King Alexander and Queen Draga. Not being a credulous person, I laughed at the prophecy, and said that anybody might predict one assassination and not be far

wrong, but to be asked to believe that the murder of a King and Queen together could be foreseen was more than I could stand. I state this fact merely as confirmatory of the abundant evidence that the assassination was foreseen, and do not covet psychic gifts.

“ARTHUR HAWKES.

“8, TRINITY ROAD, WIMBLEDON,

“*June 28th, 1903.*”

His evidence is valuable as proving—(1) that my impression at the time was that both King and Queen were assassinated; (2) that the prediction seemed palpably absurd to an experienced journalist to whom it was communicated.

STATEMENT OF MR. L——.

Mr. L——, on being asked to describe what had passed at the dinner and after it, said that he was present when the envelope containing the King's signature was given to Mrs. Burchell, that he heard her description of the King and Queen, and of the murder in the palace, and that on the following morning he communicated the facts, which were vividly present to his mind, to M. Mijatovich. He had opened the envelope during the dinner and had showed the signature to Mr. Stead's private secretary, who sat next to him at a considerable distance from Mrs. Burchell, who sat at the extreme end of the table. At the *séance* after dinner she did not take the sheet of paper out of the envelope. It was not until

after the prediction was finished that it was taken out of the envelope and Mr. L—— was asked what the word in Cyrillic characters referred to. It was a plain sheet of paper, without any crest or sign to suggest Royalty. With the exception of himself and Mr. Stead's private secretary, no one in the room knew what the envelope contained. The description of the King and the Queen were exact. Mrs. Brenchley, another clairvoyant present, added the detail that the soldiers seemed to wear Russian uniforms. The Servian uniform very closely resembles the Russian. He did not take notes. Everything passed very rapidly. After Mrs. Burchell finished he entered into conversation with her. She told him that the murder she had witnessed would certainly take place unless great care was taken to prevent it. She did not mention Servia, nor did she give the name either of the King or the Queen.

#### THE STATEMENTS OF OTHER WITNESSES.

As might be expected from the prolonged and broken-up sittings, the fifteen witnesses who were present at the *séance* vary a little in their recollection of the precise details. But with the exception of my private secretary, who remembers nothing, and of "Sylvanus," whose letters are sufficient to put him out of court as a serious witness, all the other members of the company state that they clearly remember Mrs. Burchell's agitation after she took the envelope in her hands, and they all assert that they



KING ALEXANDER'S BODYGUARD.



THE LATE KING ALEXANDER ON A HUNTING EXPEDITION.

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heard her describe on her knees a tragic scene inside a palace where a King was murdered, while the Queen prayed in vain for the murderers to stay their hand.

Of the witnesses, Mrs. L——, who had never before witnessed such a scene, gives the clearest and most detailed accounts. Mrs. Burchell also has a vivid recollection of what passed ; but although they all differ in the degree of the fulness of their memory of details, they all are absolutely at one as to the central fact, of the tragic vision, described by Mrs. Burchell after she grasped the envelope with the King's signature.

#### NEGATIVE EVIDENCE.

My private secretary, who was not paying much attention to what passed, does not remember anything that Mrs. Burchell said when she fell on her knees. He does not even remember that she did fall on her knees, and the incident has so completely escaped his memory, that he is of opinion that he must have left the room before it took place. This, however, was not the fact. Others who were present can swear that he did not leave till Mrs. Burchell had finished. Mr. Macdonald, who appears to have written two letters to the *St. James's Gazette* over the signature "Sylvanus," which reveal some of his defects as a witness, can remember the incident. He recalls the fact that Mrs. Burchell stated the envelope

was from Royalty, and he admits that she made statements that could be applied to Servia and to its murdered monarch. He endeavours to explain it away by saying that she knew of the relationship between Mr. L—— and the family of the King. There is no such relationship. Neither was Mr. L—— a friend of the King. In his first letter "Sylvanus" tried to explain the prediction away, but in a second letter he roundly asserts that Mrs. Burchell "gave no such prediction as that which had been generally reported." As a dozen other guests are prepared to swear that they heard her make the prediction, and as the Servian Minister deemed it his duty to report it to the King eight days later, the worth of "Sylvanus's" statement may be estimated at its true value. Of the fifteen persons present when Mrs. Burchell made her prediction, two were determined and inveterate sceptics, four were clairvoyants, five believed in the reality of clairvoyance, and four were persons who, like Mr. Balfour, had no settled convictions on the question.

### III.—WHAT ACTUALLY TOOK PLACE.

After the assassination I asked my former guests to write out or to tell me exactly what they remembered of the famous *séance*. The following narrative is compiled from the communications made to me together with my own recollection of what took place.

It was after ten o'clock at the restaurant when Mr. L——thrust an envelope into Mr. Stead's hand, saying, "Try her with that." Mr. Stead took the envelope, not knowing what it contained, and waited till the good lady had finished a description to the last of her sitters. She was getting tired, and wished to go home. Mr. Stead put the envelope in her hands, and asked her to try once more and see if she could get anything with it.

Mrs. Burchell took the envelope in her two hands and sat for a moment still. She turned the envelope round and round once or twice, and then said in a loud, clear voice, "Royalty! An important person—a king!"

The announcement riveted attention, and we listened eagerly for what was to follow. Mrs. Burchell spoke with extreme rapidity, and in breathless excitement. There was nothing to indicate that the medium was in a trance. She had been talking quite normally just before Mr. Stead gave her the envelope. Her eyes were closed, but this might have been done to aid in abstracting her from her surroundings. She spoke exactly as if she were looking through a window into an interior, and describing what she saw to us who were beside her. Near to her were two other clairvoyants, Mrs. Brenchley and Mrs. Manks.

Mrs. Burchell began by saying, "Royalty! An important person—a king. He is standing in a room in his palace. He is dark; stout body, and

long neck. With him is a lady, the Queen—brunette. And there," pointing to a corner of the room, "I see a child."

Then, becoming very excited, the medium exclaimed :

"Terrible! terrible! It is all bloody. I cannot bear to look. Oh, it is terrible! I cannot bear it. I see a very dark man rushing into the chamber. He tries to kill the King. The lady implores them to spare him. Oh——"

And with a cry of horror Mrs. Burchell suddenly flung herself upon her knees in such a way Mr. Stead thought she would fall, and stretched out his hand to save her. She did not fall, however, but with clasped hands the medium continued in a voice of agonised entreaty :

"They are killing him. Oh, save him, save him! The Queen falls on her knees and implores them to save her life—they will not listen. Oh, what tumult, what bloodshed! How terrible—they kill him; she pleads in vain. Now they fling her on one side and stab her with a dagger. And—oh—!—oh——"

And then Mrs. Burchell, exhausted with emotion, was falling over on her side on to the floor, when Mr. Stead got her up and put her on her seat.

When Mrs. Burchell fell on her knees, Mrs. Brenchley sprang up, saying, "Yes, yes, I get it in the air. They are killing him; I see it." "And I also," said Mrs. Manks, clasping hands with Mrs.

Brenchley, and both following her distracted cries and utterances with cries of "Yes, yes! We see it; she is quite right."

Mrs. Burchell in her agitation dropped the envelope on the floor. Mrs. Brenchley picked it up, and holding it continued to describe the scene in an agitation only a little less than Mrs. Burchell's, exclaiming, "Oh, the blood—how horrible! Look how dark it becomes; see—the soldiers are coming upon us—shooting down all they meet——"

"What are they like?" asked someone.

"They seem to me like Russian uniforms; but it is dark and I cannot see clearly."

Mrs. Brenchley, it may be stated, visited Russia last year.

"Now the King is dead!" she cried. "But oh, what confusion! what bloodshed!"

All these ejaculatory comments were rapidly uttered as Mrs. Burchell was being helped to her seat, and not much notice was taken of them at the time. Mrs. Brenchley, however, declares that she has a lively recollection of what she saw and what she said.

Mr. Stead turned an inquiring gaze to Mr. L——, who had given him the envelope. We were all under the impression of the extraordinary dramatic force with which Mrs. Burchell had described the death scene and acted the despairing pleading of the Queen. But none of us knew in what Court the tragedy had been or was to be enacted.

"What was in the envelope?" Mr. Stead asked.

"Look," said Mr. L——. Opening the envelope, he took out a sheet of notepaper, on which was the signature, "Alexander."

"It is the King," said he.

"But," said Mr. Stead, "her description—was it correct?"

"It was exact," he replied. "The palace, the King, the Queen. Her description is exact."

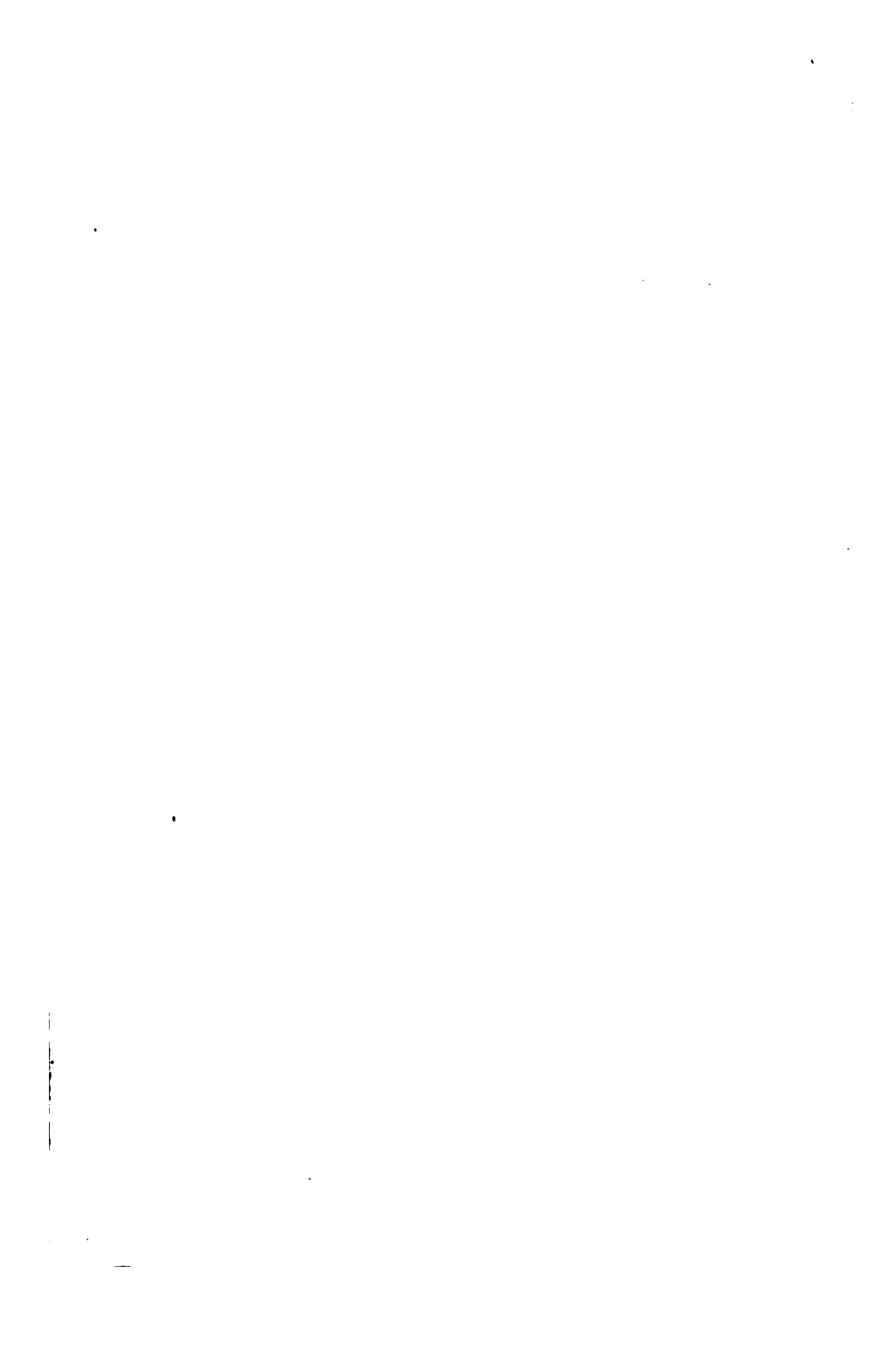
And then the medium, who had been silent as if recovering from the emotion through which she had passed, said to my friend, "Depend upon it, it will all happen as I have seen it, if nothing is done to prevent it, and that ere long."

Mrs. Burchell's own version is that she added, "Even then, although they may postpone it, it will certainly come to pass."

The whole of the foregoing narrative has been submitted in proof to all the sitters. All of them—with the exception of my private secretary, who cannot remember, and Mr. Macdonald, who first explains the prediction and then denies that it was ever made—confirm the general accuracy of the whole story. All the rest remember the extreme agitation of the clairvoyant, the dramatic rendering of the entreaties of the Queen, the description of the murder of the King in the interior of his palace in a scene of terrible tumult and bloodshed.

In the next number of the *Review* I shall publish

the sequel to this story, telling how the Society for Physical Research investigated this case. It is a narrative which sheds a flood of light upon the methods of this Society, and will be read with interest by all interested in the subject.





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